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THE
POEMS
OF
OSSIAN,
Originally Translated
By JAMES MACPHERSON, Esq.
Attempted in English Verse
BY THE LATE
REV. JOHN SHACKLETON.

‘ We may boldly assign *Ossian* a place among
those, whose works are to last for ages.’—BLAIR.

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Fingal:

AN ANCIENT EPIC POEM.

ARGUMENT.

CUCHULLIN (General of the Irish tribes, in the minority of Cormac, king of Ireland) sitting alone beneath a tree, at the gate of Tura, a Castle of Ulster; (the other chiefs having gone, on a hunting party, to Cromla, a neighbouring hill) is informed of the landing of Swaran, King of Lochlin, by Moran, the son of Fithil, one of his scouts. He convenes the chiefs, and (in a council of war) disputes run high concerning giving battle to the enemy. Connal, the petty king of Tongorma, and an intimate friend of Cuchullin, was for retreating or concluding an armistice or a temporary peace; till Fingal, king of those Caledonians, who inhabited the north-west coast of Scotland, (whose aid had been previously solicited,) should arrive. But, Calmar, the son of Matha, lord of Lara, a country in Connacht, was for engaging the enemy immediately. Cuchullia, of himself willing to fight, goes into the opinion of Calmar. On reviewing the forces, he missed Fergus, Duchomar and Cathbait, three of his bravest heroes.—Fergus, however, soon arrives; and informs Cuchullin of the death of the other two: which introduces the affecting episode of Morna, the daughter of Cormac. The army of Cuchullin at a distance, is described by Swaran, who sent the son of Arno to observe the motions of the enemy; whilst he himself ranged his forces in order of battle. The son of Arno, returning to Swaran, describes to him Cuchullin's chariot, and the terrible appearance of that hero. The armies engage; but, night coming on, leaves the victory undecided. Cuchullin, according to the hospitality of the times; sends to Swaran a formal invitation to a feast, by his bard Carril, the son of Kinfena. Swaran refuses to come. Carril relates to Cuchullin the story of Grudar and Brassolis. A party, by Connal's advice, is sent to observe the enemy; which closes the action of the first day.

BOOK I.

BY Tura's massy wall, where stood a tree,
The leaves whereof loud rustled in the gale;
As musing on heroic Cairbar's fall,
A hero, whom in battle he had slain,
Cuchullin sat: (his shield laid on the grass;

His j.v'lin rear'd against the mossy rock :)
 Moran, the scout of th' ocean, Fithil's son,
 In haste approached ; and, trembling, cry'd aloud:
 ' Cuchullin, rise :—dread Swaran's ships appear!
 ' A num'rous foe comes bounding on the main.' 10

To him the blue-ey'd chieftain quick reply'd :
 ' Thy wonted fears, thou son of Fithil, tend
 ' To magnify the number of the foe.
 ' Perhaps the stormy king of lonely hills
 ' A succour comes to Ullin's verdant plains.' 15

‘ High and conspicuous as a rock of ice,’
 Moran continu'd, ‘ I their chief beheld!
 ‘ His spear is lofty as that blasted fir:
 ‘ Like the full moon, when rising, is his shield:
 ‘ Encircled by his cloud-like host of death, 20
 ‘ Exalted on the rocky beach he sat.’
 “ Thou chief of men, our force is great,” ‘ I cry'd :—
 “ Our num'rous host is potent in the field.
 “ Tis true, for courage thou art justly fam'd
 “ But Tura's walls with valiant heroes teem.” 25

‘ As, when the angry billows of the main
 ‘ In wint'ry storms majestically roll,
 ‘ And lash the sturdy rock with thund'ring roar ;
 ‘ So Swaran answer'd :—“ In these green domains
 “ Where is my match ? Beneath my conqu'ring hand 30
 “ Heroes themselves, without distinction, fall.
 “ Fingal alone, the chief of stormy hills,
 “ Before my arms of death can pow'rful stand.
 “ On Malmor's heath, at wrestling, once we strove ;
 “ Whilst knotty oaks gave way to our dire tread, 35
 “ And stoutest rocks from their foundations fell.
 “ The riv'lets too, unable to maintain
 “ Their pristine course, fled murmur'ring from our strife.

“ In combat we three days successive strove,
 “ Whilst heroes at a distance trembling stood. 40.
 “ Upon the fourth, the King of Morven says:
 “ Before my strength the king of th’ ocean fell:—
 “ But Swaran says he *stood*.—To pow’r as great
 “ As Malmor’s storms, let dark Cuchullin yield.”

‘ Submit to Swaran!’ said the blue-ey’d chief. 45
 ‘ No—never will Cuchullin yield to man:
 ‘ But live with greatness, or with honour die.
 ‘ Go, son of Fithil:—take my beaming spear,
 ‘ And haste direct for Tura’s rustling gate.
 ‘ There hangs the shield, which valiant Cathbait wore;—50
 ‘ It’s martial sound, when struck, will soon alarm
 ‘ My valiant heroes hunting on the hill.’

Straight Moran went, and struck the bossy shield:
 The rocks and hills responsive gave the sound:
 Thro’ all the sylvan grove the clangor spread. 55
 The deer, that herded near the lake of roes,
 Look’d wild, and trembled at the dreadful sound.
 Forth from the sounding rock bold Curach leap’d;
 And also Connal of the bloody spear.
 Fair Crugal’s breast with martial ardour heaves, 60
 And Favi’s son forsakes the dark-brown hind.
 ‘ Hark!’ Ronnar said, ‘ it is the shield of war!’
 —‘ And struck,’ said Lugar, ‘ by Cuchullin’s spear!’
 Son of the sea, put on thy martial arms!
 Calmar, in haste gird on thy sounding steel! 65
 Puno! thou dreadful hero! haste—arise.
 From thy red tree of Cromla, Cairbar, come!
 O Eth! Thy knee of snowy whiteness bend
 And down from Lena’s streams directly fly.
 Stretch, Cáolt, thy white side; as thou along 70
 The whistling heath of Mora tak’st thy way.

Thy side, which emulates the lucid foam
 Of troubled waters, when tempestuous winds,
 On Cuthon's murmuring rocks forth pour the wave.

Swoll'n with the pride of their past, valiant deeds, 75
 The warlike chiefs I plainly now discern !
 Their souls enkindled by the wars of old
 And deeds of other times, new vigour take.
 Their eager eyes resemble flames of fire,
 And roll in all directions for the foe. 80
 Their mighty hands their swords already seize,
 And from their sides of steel the light'ning pours.
 As from the mountains with impetuous force
 The headlong streams in rapid currents roll :
 Each warrior rushes roaring from his hill 85
 With dauntless gait ! With their forefather's arms
 Girt cap à peè, each chief of battle shines.
 Gloomy and dark their heroes form the train,
 Like convolutions of the rainy clouds
 Behind red meteors of the angry sky, 90
 And by the splendour render'd more obscure.
 Now high ascend the sounds of clashing arms,
 With canine howlings more terrific made.
 Unequally the song of battle bursts,
 And rocking Cromia echoes all around. 95
 As mist, in Autumn, rising from the plains,
 In wild di-order breaks :—then upward rolls
 In massy columns to the mountains' height,
 And on the summit of the shaded hills
 Rests, and extends its density along : 100
 On Lena's dusky heath ; so stand the chiefs.

Cuchullin cries : ‘ Sons of the narrow vales,
 ‘ You, hunters of the timid deer I greet !
 ‘ Another sport with rapid pace draws nigh,

- ‘ Dark as the rolling of yon turgid wave. 105
- ‘ Ye sons of war, what say you? shall we fight?
- ‘ Or, verdant Innis-fail, submissive yield
- ‘ To haughty Lochlin? Speak, thou first of men,
- ‘ O Connal, breaker of the sounding shields!
- ‘ Thy hand with Lochlin often hast thou try’d: 110
- ‘ Wilt thou once more lift up thy father’s spear?

To him the chief, with calmness, thus reply’d:

- ‘ Know, O Cuchillin, Connal’s spear is keen:
- ‘ And in the heat of battle gladly shines,
- ‘ Whilst thousands fall by its destructive steel. 115
- ‘ Yet, tho’ on warlike feats my hand be bent;
- ‘ Still, peace to Erin is my anxious wish.
- ‘ Cast now thine eyes, thou first in Cormac’s war,
- ‘ Upon the king of th’ ocean’s sable fleet!
- ‘ Upon the coast his masts as num’rous stand 120
- ‘ As in the lake of Lego grow the reeds!
- ‘ Like spacious groves, with shady azure dim,
- ‘ Where trees by turns yield to the squally wind,
- ‘ His ships appear. And his embattled chiefs
- ‘ Stand crowded. Therefore Connal is for peace.— 125
- ‘ Fingal himself, the first of mortal men,
- ‘ By whose dispersing arm are swept away
- ‘ The most renown’d for might, with equal ease
- ‘ As heath by stormy winds; when echoing roar
- ‘ The foaming streams thro’ Cona, and black night 130
- ‘ With sable clouds envelops all the hill—
- ‘ Fingal, I say, would Swaran’s arm avoid.’

- ‘ Fly, chief of peace,’ said Calmar, Mathia’s son,
- ‘ Swift as the wind fly to thy silent hills,
- ‘ Where never shone the splendid spear of war. 135
- ‘ On Cromla’s summit chase the dark-brown deer
- ‘ And with thine arrows stop the bounding roe.

‘ Of Lena. But, let Semo’s blue-ey’d son,
 ‘ Renown’d Cuchullin, ruler of the war,
 ‘ With dreadful carnage scatter Lochlin’s sons ; 140
 ‘ And break their haughty ranks with warlike roar !
 ‘ Let not a vessel from the snowy realms
 ‘ On Inistore’s dark rolling waves appear.

‘ Ye dark and pow’rful winds of Erin rise !
 ‘ Ye whirlwinds of the heath roar out your blasts ! 145
 ‘ Torn in a clo d by angry ghosts of men
 ‘ Let me amidst the wint’ry tempest die ;—
 ‘ Let *this* be Calmar’s fate ; if e’er the chase
 ‘ Delighted him, like battles of the shield.’

‘ Calmar ! reply’d the chief, sedate and slow : 150
 ‘ Know, son of Matha ;—Connal never fled :
 ‘ But with his friends press’d swiftly on the foe
 ‘ In hottest fight ; yet small is Connal’s fame !
 ‘ Till laurels crown’d the day, I firmly stood,
 ‘ And lent my aid. The valiant overcame ! 155
 ‘ But, son of Semo, hearken to my voice ;
 ‘ And Cormac’s ancient throne with care preserve.
 ‘ Purchase, by wealth an’ half the land, a peace
 ‘ Till fierce Fingal with dreadful battle come.
 ‘ Or, if Cuchullin battle should prefer, 160
 ‘ I scruple not to lift my sword and spear.
 ‘ I’ll joyfully thro’ thousands cut my way,
 ‘ And my dark soul shall brighten in the fight !

‘ To me delightful is the noise of arms !’
 Replies Cuchullin, ‘ sweet as to my ear 165
 ‘ Heaven’s thunder, ’midst the vernal show’r.
 ‘ The shining tribes collect without delay,
 ‘ And let the sons of war pass my review.

- Let them in order move along the heath,
- As sun-beams bright, before th' approaching storm, 170
- When western winds collect the pregnant clouds,
- And Morven's oaks give echo on the shore.'

Then pass'd the chiefs before him in review—
 But, noting some not present, he exclaim'd:

- Where now are my associates in the war? 175
- Where are the consorts of my dubious fate?
- Where art thou, Câthbat, with the snowy breast?
- And where Duchômar, that dark cloud of war?
- And am I too deserted in my need
- By thee, O Fergns, in this day of storms! 180
- Fergus! The first to share our festive joys!
- Fam'd Rossa's son! The powerful arm of death!
- Hail, Rossa's warlike son! approachest thou,
- Like some swift roe from Malmor's verdant plains;
- Or, like a bounding hart from th' echoing hills?— 185
- But, say, what gloom pervades the soul of war?

‘ Four stones,’ reply’d the chief, ‘ rise on the grave
 Of valiant Câthbat.—By these hands intomb’d,
 That cloud of war, Duchômar, also lies.
 As gleams the sunbeam on the sloping hill, 190
 So shonest thou, O Câthbat, Torman’s son!
 As fogs, which from the marshy Lano rise,
 And death in autumn to the people bring,
 Thy steps, Duchômar, were with deadly pow’r!
 Calm, Morna, is thy sleep within the rock, 195
 Fairest of maids! Thou hast in darkness fall’n!
 So, when the cheerful light of day is gone,
 And all the desert clad in sable night,
 The sudden shooting of the meteor’s blaze
 With pleasure strikes the lonely trav’ller’s eye, 200
 And leaves him to lament its transient beam.’

‘ I haste to hear,’ said Semo’s blue-ey’d son,
 ‘ By what strange fate the sons of Erin fell ?
 ‘ Courageously contesting with the foe
 ‘ Fell they, before the arms of Lochlin’s sons ?
 ‘ Or, say, what dire catastrophe confines
 ‘ The chiefs of Cromla to the narrow house ?’

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Direct to him the hero then reply’d :

‘ Where grows the stately oak of noisy streams,
 ‘ There Câthbat fell by dark Duchômar’s sword !’
 ‘ This done, to Tura’s cave in haste he came,
 ‘ And thus to lovely Morna made his suit :
 ‘ Fairest of women, Morna, why alone ?
 ‘ O Cormac Cairbar’s lovely daughter, why
 ‘ Thus unattended in the rocky cave ?’
 ‘ The whirling streams with murmurs hoarse resound ;
 ‘ And aged trees with groaning motion wave.
 ‘ That troubled lake is ruffled with the winds ;
 ‘ And gloomy clouds o’erhang the low’ring sky !
 ‘ But thy fair self outvies the mountain-snow :
 ‘ Thy auburn tresses, waving in the gale,
 ‘ Like Cromla’s mist appear, when on the cliff
 ‘ It curls, reflecting to the western beam !
 ‘ Amidst the scenes at Brano of the streams,
 ‘ Not more attracting to my feasted eyes
 ‘ Two polish’d rocks appear, than thy fair breasts.
 ‘ Thy arms in whiteness also emulate
 ‘ Two pillars in the mansion of Fingâl.’
 ‘ Duchômar, whence !’—Reply’d the white-arm’d maid,
 ‘ Whence comest thou, the blackest of thy race ?’
 ‘ Dark are thy brows, and frightfully they lour :
 ‘ Like globes of fire terrific roll thy eyes.—
 ‘ But say what news, Duchômar, of the foe ?
 ‘ Does Swaran yet approach upon the main ?’

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“ I’m now returning, Morna, from the hill, 235
 “ Where browse the dark-brown hinds ; with my bent yew
 “ Three have I slain. Three others, too, have fall’n
 “ By my long-bounding dogs, swift in the chase.
 “ Cormac’s fair daughter, charming in my eyes,
 “ My life I hold not half so dear as thee ; 240
 “ For thee my shaft has pierc’d one stately roe.
 “ High was his branchy head ;—his feet like wind !”

“ The beauteous maid, with calmness, thus reply’d :
 “ I love thee not, Duchômar, gloomy chief.
 “ Of solid rock thy flinty heart is made, 245
 “ And terror issues from thy sable brow.—
 “ —But thou, O Câthbat ! Torman’s warlike son,
 “ Art still the fav’rite of thy Morna’s heart ;
 “ More pleasing too, than in the gloomy storm,
 “ The genial sun-beam darting on the hill. 250
 “ Didst thou, Duchômar, see fam’d Torman’s son
 “ With lovely aspect, on his hill of hinds ?
 “ Câthbat’s approach here Cormac’s daughter waits”—

“ And long shall Morna wait”—Duchômar said,
 “ Long shall she wait.—His blood is on my sword ! 255
 “ At Brano’s streams the valiant hero fell !
 “ His tomb conspicuous on huge Cromla’s hills,
 “ High, Cormac-Cairbar’s daughter, will I raise.
 “ But, let Duchômar in thy heart prevail :
 “ My arm in strength transcends the raging storm.” 260

“ And is the warlike son of Torman fall’n !”
 “ Exclam’d the beauteous maid with tearful eye :
 “ And is he fall’n too on his echoing heath !
 “ The youth, whose breast outv’d the mountain-snow !—
 “ The swiftest courser in the busy chase ; 265
 “ The dread of strangers, that approach by sea !

“ As is thy name, Duchòmar, are thy deeds ;
 “ And unto Morna cruel is thy arm
 “ Hard-hearted foe, give me that reeking sword—
 “ The blood of Càthbat is to Morna dear.”

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‘ He gave the sword to her fast-falling tears.—
 ‘ —Direct she plung’d it in his manly breast !—
 ‘ Then, down he fell ; in massy bulk as great
 ‘ As some huge mound, that banks a mountain-stream,
 ‘ And, stretching out his sinewy arm, exclaim’d : 275
 ‘ Daughter of Cormac-Cairbar, by thy hand
 ‘ Duchòmar falls ! For, cold within my breast
 ‘ I feel the sword ! Yes, Morna, it is chill.—
 ‘ Give me to Moina, that smooth-breasted maid—
 ‘ Duchòmar was the image of her dream. 280
 ‘ My tomb she’ll raise ; which future hunters shall
 ‘ In raptures visit, and my mem’ry praise.
 ‘ But from my wounded breast extract the sword :
 ‘ I feel it, Morna, in my vitals, chill !’

‘ She came, in all her tears, she came in haste 285
 ‘ And from his breast drew forth the chilly steel :—
 ‘ Duchòmar seiz’d it ; and, with vengeance fir’d,
 ‘ Pierc’d her white side :—she instant sunk in death !
 ‘ Her streaming blood gush’d sounding from the wound,
 ‘ And her white arm is stain’d with purple gore : 290
 ‘ Her beauteous locks spread wildly in the dust.
 ‘ Rolling in death, the maid expiring lay,
 ‘ And Tura’s cave gave echo to her groans.’

‘ Peace to their air-borne souls,’ Cuchullin said,
 ‘ Proportion’d to their dangers were their deeds ! 295
 ‘ May they attend me, borne on cloudy cars ;
 ‘ And, when occasion calls, to me appear !
 ‘ That my firm soul in danger may stand strong !

‘ My arm coercive, as heav’n’s thunder rolls !
 ‘ But, near the window, where I peaceful rest,
 ‘ When wars disturb my anxious soul no more ;
 ‘ Do thou, O Morna, on a moon-beam ride.

‘ But now collect the strength of all my tribes ;
 ‘ And move with speed direct to Erin’s wats.
 ‘ Attend me seated on my martial car,
 ‘ And let the prancing sound your joys increase.
 ‘ Three glitt’ring spears beside me place, and close
 ‘ The bounding of my foaming steeds pursue.
 ‘ Hence, when the battle shades my beaming steel ;
 ‘ My soul, amidst my friends, shall courage take.

As down the shaded side of Cromla rush
 The foaming streams, with still increased force ;
 When ratt’ling peals of thunder roll above,
 And dark-brown night o’ertops the mountain-height :
 So fierce, so vast, so terrible rush’d on
 The sons of Erin, dauntless in their course.
 Like some huge whale, within the ocean vast,
 Pursu’d by surges in majestic train ;
 The chief pour’d forth his valour like a stream,
 Rolling his might along the winding shore.

Loud as the sounding of a winter stream,
 The sons of Lochlin heard the roaring noise.
 The king of ocean struck his bossy shield,
 And warn’d the son of Arno to attend.
 ‘ Says he, what murmur rolls along the hill,
 ‘ Like evening-flies in congregated swarms ?
 ‘ The rustling winds roar in the distant grove ;
 ‘ Or else, the sons of Innis-fail descend.
 ‘ Before my waves foam turbid with the storm,
 ‘ Such noises issue from drear Gormal’s height :—

‘ Go, son of Arno ;—mount the steep ascent.
 ‘ And scout the dark-brown surface of the heath.’

He went—and soon with trembling steps return’d,
 And widely roll’d his eyes with dread dismay.
 Against his side high beat his flut’ring heart :— 335
 At length, he answer’d, fault’ring, broken, slow :—

‘ Chief of the dark-brown shield, make haste, arise—
 ‘ The dark, the mountain-stream of battle comes !
 ‘ Erin’s strong sons, deep-moving I behold !
 ‘ Like flames of death, the car of battle comes— 340
 ‘ Cuchullin’s rapid car !—fam’d Semo’s son !
 ‘ Its hinder part bends like retorted waves ;
 ‘ Or, like the curlings of the golden mist,
 ‘ Embossed shine its sides with costly stones,
 ‘ Like sparkling waves around the boat of night. 345
 ‘ Of polish’d yew its shining beam is made,
 ‘ And bone of smoothest polish forms its seat.
 ‘ With glittering spears replenish’d are it’s sides,
 ‘ And on it’s bottom warlike heroes tread.
 ‘ On the right side before the splendid car 350
 ‘ Stately appears the snorting, mounting-steed,
 ‘ High-man’d, bread-breasted, proud, high-leaping, strong.
 ‘ Loud sounds his hoof ; and, like that curling stream
 ‘ Of mountain-smoke, spreads his wide-flowing mane.
 ‘ Bright shine the sides of this unrivall’d steed, 355
 ‘ And fitly’s he Sulín-Sithfádda nam’d.
 ‘ On the left side before the shining car
 ‘ Is seen th’ high-headed, strong-hoof’d, snorting steed,
 ‘ With sable mane, and bounding from the hill.
 ‘ Among the stormy sons of martial swords 360
 ‘ This rapid courser is Dusrónnal nam’d.
 ‘ A thousand thongs secure the stately car :
 ‘ Bright shine th’ high-polish’d bits ’midst wreaths of foam :

- With gems bright-studded bend the slender thongs 365
- Around the stately necks of these two steeds :
- The steeds, which course across the streamy vales
- With speed more rapid than the winged mist,
- And, with a deer-like wildness in their flight,
- Are strong as eagles falling on their prey !
- Not more terrific are the wintry gales, 370
- Which round the top of snow-clad Gormal roar !
- Within the car appears the mighty chief,
- The son of swords, endow'd with stormy strength !
- Cuchullin is this valiant hero's name,
- Son of renowned Semo, king of shells ; 375
- Whose swarthy cheek is like my polish'd yew.
- Beneath his arched eye-brow, black with hair,
- Wide is the look of his blue rolling eye !
- His lambent hair flows, flame-like, from his head,
- Whilst, bending forward, he directs the spear. 380
- Rough as a storm along the streamy vale
- Cuchullin comes ! Fly, king of ocean, fly'—

‘ When was I known to fly,’ reply’d the king,
‘ From hottest battles of the sword or spear?
‘ *When*, cow’rdly son of Arno, did *I* fly? 385
‘ The storm of Gormal I undaunted met,
‘ When lash’d the foaming waves with billowing noise.—
‘ Shall I, who boldly stem’d the cloudy storm,
‘ With cow’rdice from the warlike hero fly?—

‘ Not e'en Fingal himself with dread approach 390
‘ Could shade with fear my unrelaxed soul.
‘ Rise to the battle:—now, my thousands, rise:
‘ And like the echoing main around me pour!
‘ Round the bright steel of your undaunted king
‘ Assemble, strong as rocks in my domain: 395
‘ Those rocks, that meet the storm with joy, and stretch
‘ Their tow'ring trees in contest with the wind?’

As from two echoing hills with headlong force
 Dark storms of gloomy autumn murmur'ring pour :—
 As from high rocks two dark, descending streams, 400
 In course oppos'd, mix'd roaring on the plain :
 So, each to each, Lochlin and Innis-fail
 Loud, rough, and dark, in dreadful battle meet.
 Chief mixes strokes with chief ; and man with man :
 Steel against steel rebounds with clang ing noise. 405
 With crashing din th' high crested helmets cleave :
 Loud twang the strings upon the polish'd yews :
 In thick'ning show'rs darts rush along the sky :
 Bright spears descend, like circling rays of light,
 Gilding the stormy face of midnight gloom ; 410
 And blood in every quarter bursts and smokes.

As, when the main by raging tempests swells
 Like mountains vast, the groaning billows roll ;—
 Or, the last peal of thunder rends the clouds ;
 So sounds the battle with loud, martial roar ! 415
 Tho' Cormac's hundred bards themselves were there
 To celebrate the battle in their song,
 Faint were the voices of an hundred bards
 To future times the carnage dire to send.
 Great was the slaughter of the falling chiefs, 420
 And vast the purple tide of valiant blood !

Mourn, tuneful bards, renown'd Sithállin's death !
 For her lov'd Arden let Fióna's breast
 On the dark heaths with sorrow sadly heave !
 Like two swift hinds upon the desert heights, 425
 By mighty Swaran's hands these heroes fell ;
 When he thro' thousands roar'd. So, of the storm
 Rests the shrill spirit on dark Gormal's clouds,
 And sits triumphant at the sailor's death.

Nor idly slept, chief of the misty isle, 430
 Thy hand, Cuchullin, Sémo's warlike son :
 For, num'rous were the deaths of thy dread arm !
 His sword was like the piercing beam of heav'n,
 Which on the vale descends, when with its rays
 Of heat intense the blasted people fall, 435
 And the chink'd hills are burning all around.
 Dusrónnal snorted o'er the scatter'd dead :—
 His hoof Sifádda bath'd in purple gore.
 Behind them trunks in scatter'd order lay,
 Like prostrate trees on Cromla's desert vast 440
 Uprooted by the blasts of midnight storms.
 O beauteous maid of Inistore, more fair
 Than is th' aërial spirit of the hill
 O'er silent Morven on a sun-beam borne,
 Weep on the rocks, whilst loudly roar the winds ; 445
 And o'er the billows bend thy beauteous face :—
 He's fall'n ! Beneath Cuchullin's glitt'ring sword
 Low lies thy fav'rite youth, a pallid corpse !
 Hereafter martial valour shall no more
 Advance the youth to match the blood of kings ! 450
 For Trenar dy'd !—O maid of Inistore.
 Struck with the vision of his pallid ghost,
 At his far-distant home, the grey dogs howl.
 And in the hall too hangs his bow unstrung,
 Whilst on the heath his hinds in silence browse. 455

As roll a thousand waves, with boist'rous roar,
 Against a rock ; so Swáran's host advanc'd.
 As doth that rock those thousand waves oppose,
 So Innis-fail intrepid Swáran met.
 Death all his dreadful voices raises round, 460
 And mixes with the clangor of their shields.
 Each hero, like a gloomy column mov'd,
 Bearing a sword coruscant as the fire.

From wing to wing the echoing field resounds,
As when a hundred hammers of the forge
On the red metal fall and rise by turns.

465

But who are these on Lena's heathy plain,
Gloomy and dark, like two umbrageous clouds,
With flaming swords bright as the light'ning's blaze ?
The little hills with gen'ral tremor move,
And mossy rocks from their foundations shake !
Who—but the son of ocean ; and the chief
Of Erin, mounted on his stately car ?
Their num'rous friends with anxious eyes survey
Their dim appearance on the gloomy heath.
But night conceals the chief in cloudy shades,
And puts a period to the dreadful fight.

475

The deer, the early fortune of the chase
Before the valiant heroes left the hill,
Then Dorglas plac'd on Cromla's shaggy side,
A hundred youths collect the dark-brown heath :
Ten heroes blow the crackling, spreading fire :
Three hundred others chuse the polish'd stones :
And soon the feast is ready, smoking wide.
'Twas then Cuchullin, chief of Erin's war,
Resum'd his mighty soul, and look'd around,
To Carril, son of songs, of other times,
Kinfena's son, with hair of hoary grey ;
He standing on his beamy spear thus spoke :
‘ Is this repast serv'd up for me alone,
‘ Whilst Lochlin's king remains on Ullin's shore
‘ Far from the deer of his own native hills
‘ And sounding halls set out with princely feasts ?
‘ Carril of other times, to Swaran haste,
‘ And tell him what I give thee in command :
‘ Tell him, who from the roaring ocean came,
‘ Cuchullin bids him welcome to his feast.

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‘ Here let him listen to my sounding groves,
 ‘ Amidst the dark and gloomy clouds of night ;
 ‘ For, cold and bleak brush o'er his roaring seas 500
 ‘ The blust'ring winds.—Here let him praise the harp
 ‘ In concert warbling with heroic songs.’

Old Carril went with soft and sweetest voice,
 And Swaran call'd, the king of dark-brown shields :
 ‘ Rise, king of groves ; rise from thy skins of chase : 505
 ‘ Cuchullin nobly gives the joy of shells :—
 ‘ Partake the feast of Erin's blue-ey'd son.’

As sound, before a storm, bleak Cromla's heights,
 He answer'd sullen : ‘ Tho' their snowy arms
 ‘ Thy daughters, Innis-fail, should all extend :— 510
 ‘ Tho' high the heavings of their breasts should rise,
 ‘ And softly roll their beateous eyes of love :
 ‘ Yet, firmly fix'd as Lochlin's thousand rocks
 ‘ Here Swaran shall remain, 'till circling beams,
 ‘ New springing from the east, shall introduce 515
 ‘ Bright morn, and light me to Cuchullin's death.
 ‘ Sweetly the wind of Lochlin greets my ear,
 ‘ Rushing along my seas.—In all my shrouds
 ‘ It speaks aloft ; and, by its whistling roar,
 ‘ Reminds me of my distant, verdant groves 520
 ‘ On Gormal's plains, which often to my winds
 ‘ Gave loudest echo ; when, in hot pursuit
 ‘ Of the fierce mountain-boar, my spear was red.
 ‘ Let dark Cuchullin Cormac's ancient throne
 ‘ To me surrender ; else, the purple foam 525
 ‘ Of his proud blood shall shortly stain the stream,
 ‘ That rolls from Erin's hills with headlong course.’

Carril of other times, returning, said :

‘ Sad is the sound of Swaran's dreadful voice !—

‘ Sad to himself alone,’ said Semo’s son : 530

‘ But, Carril, now swell high the tuneful note ;

‘ And tell the valiant deeds of other times.

‘ Give now the joy, the pleasing joy of grief,

‘ And send the gloom of night away in song ;

‘ For, many warlike chiefs and maids of love 535

‘ On Innis-fail have mov’d. And lovely sound

‘ The rocks of Albion with the songs of woe ;

‘ When the loud chace is ended, and the streams

‘ Of echoing Cona answer Ossian’s voice.’

Carril commenc’d his song : ‘ In other days 540

‘ To Erin’s coast the sons of ocean came.

‘ With bending sail to Ullin’s verdant plains

‘ A thousand vessels bounded o’er the waves.

‘ To meet the stormy race of dark-brown shields,

‘ The sons of Innis-fail in might arose.

‘ There marched stately Cairbar, first of men, 545

‘ And Grudar, noble youth, of stature tall.

‘ Long had their strife been for the spotted bull,

‘ That low’d on ridgy Golbun’s echoing heath.

‘ Each claim’d him for his own, and often death

‘ Decision threaten’d at the point of steel. 550

‘ Yet, of their feuds forgetful, side by side

‘ These heroes fought, till ocean’s strangers fled.

‘ What names were more conspicuous on the hill,

‘ Than these two chiefs ? But ah ! Why ever low’d

‘ That bull on crooked Golbun’s echoing heaths ? 555

‘ Like snow, they saw him bounding on the hill ;

‘ And at the sight their former grudge return’d.

‘ On Lubar’s grassy banks these heroes fought,

‘ And stately Grudar, like a sunbeam, fell.

‘ Fierce Cairbar came to Tura’s echoing vale, 560

‘ Where Brássolis, his fairest sister, sat

‘ Retir’d, and rais’d her pensive song of grief.

‘ She sung of feats by valiant Grudar done,
 ‘ With love of whom her secret bosom glow’d.
 ‘ She mourn’d his danger in the field of blood ;— 565
 ‘ But still she cherish’d hopes of his return.
 ‘ From her rich robe her bosom white appears ;
 ‘ So shines the moon thro’ silver clouds of night.

‘ Her voice, to raise the plaintive song of grief,
 ‘ Excell’d the softest warblings of the lyre. 570
 ‘ On Grudar still she fix’d her anxious soul :—
 ‘ *His* were the secret glances of her eye.
 ‘ When wilt thou come, thou mighty in the war,
 ‘ In armour deck’d ?” she mournfully complain’d.

‘ Amidst her lamentations Cairbar came’— 575
 “ Take, Brássolis,” said he, “ this shield of blood.
 “ In some conspicuous place within my hall
 “ Suspend the bloody armour of my foe.”

‘ Her tender heart beat high against her side,
 ‘ And, with distraction pale, away she flew. 580
 ‘ Her fav’rite youth she found in all his blood !
 ‘ On Cromla’s heath, and there the fair one dy’d !

‘ Here rests their dust, Cuchullin ; and to meet
 ‘ Each other in a more exalted state,
 ‘ This pair of yews, sprung from their lonely tombs, 585
 ‘ Anxious incline. The envy of the plain
 ‘ Were Brássolis, and Grudar of the hill.
 ‘ Their names immortal in the tuneful lay,
 ‘ To gratify the hero, shall remain.’

The blue-ey’d son of Erin then reply’d : 590
 ‘ Melodious, Carril, sounds thy charming voice,
 ‘ And pleasant are the words of other times !

‘ Calmly they flow, as vernal show’rs descend ;
 ‘ Whilst on the meads the genial sunbeams fall,
 ‘ And o’er the hills the silver azure flies. 595

‘ O strike the harp in praise of my belov’d,
 ‘ The lonely sunbeam of Dunscáich—of her,
 ‘ Whom in the misty isle I left behind.
 ‘ Now strike the harp, in sweetest strains, to praise
 ‘ Bragéla dear, the spouse of Semo’s son. 600

‘ Dost thou, in hopes to spy Cuchullin’s sails,
 ‘ Raise thy bright face above the rocky height ?
 ‘ Deceptive of thy hopes the foaming sea
 ‘ Far distant rolls, in semblance like my sails.
 ‘ Retire, my love ; for evening-shades descend, 605
 ‘ And ruffling winds sigh in thy flowing hair.
 ‘ In my resounding halls retired feast,
 ‘ And think of seasons past ; nor me expect,
 ‘ Till terminated is the storm of war.

‘ To wars and arms, O Connal, turn my eyes ; 610
 ‘ And Sorglan’s daughter from my thoughts remove ;
 ‘ For lovely is her tressy, raven hair,
 ‘ And white her bosom, as the mountain-snow !

Then Connal, slow to speak, sedate reply’d :

‘ Against the stormy race of ocean guard. 615
 ‘ Send now abroad thy watchful troop of night,
 ‘ And reconnoitre Swaran’s strength with care.
 ‘ But hark, Cuchullin ! I’m dispos’d for peace,
 ‘ Till succour from the lonely desert come ;
 ‘ Till dread Fingal, the first of men, arrive, 620
 ‘ And on our fields beam circling as the sun.’

The hero struck the shield of his alarms—
 And, straight, the warriors of the night mov’d on.
 The rest, within the heath, where browse the deer,
 Retir’d ; and slept amidst the dusky wind. 625

The late departed ghosts approached near,
And gently swam along the gloomy clouds.
Then, to dark Lena's silence far remov'd,
Their distant voices gave a feeble sound.

END OF BOOK FIRST.

Fingal:

AN ANCIENT EPIC POEM.

ARGUMENT.

THE ghost of Crugal, one of the Irish heroes, who was killed in battle, appearing to Connal, foretels the defeat of Cuchullin in the next battle: and earnestly advises him to make peace with Swaran. Connal communicates the vision; but Cuchullin, who from principles of honour would not be the first to sue for peace, is inflexible. Morning comes: Swaran proposes dishonourable terms to Cuchullin, which are rejected. The battle begins, and is obstinately fought for some time; until, upon the flight of Grimal, the whole Irish army give way. Cuchullin and Connal cover the retreat. Carril leads them to a neighbouring hill, whither they are soon followed by Cuchullin himself, who describes the fleet of Fingal making towards the coast: but, night coming on, he loses sight of it again. Cuchullin, dejected at his defeat, attributes his ill success to the death of Feirdra, his friend, whom he had killed some time before. Carril (to shew that ill success did not always attend those who have innocently killed their friends) introduces the episode of Connal and Galvina.

BOOK II.

BENEATH the aged tree, where sounds the stream
Descending from the mountains, Connal lay.
A mossy stone supports his head, and shrill
Thro' Lent's heath he hears the voice of night.
The son of swords, regardless of the foe,
Apart from his associate heroes slept:
And, in his rest, my valiant hero saw
A dark-red stream of fire slide down the hill.

On it was seated Crugal, lately fall'n
By Swaran's hand amidst the strife of war.

5

10

His pallid face beam'd as the setting moon,
And mountain-clouds his sable vesture form'd.
Like two decaying flames his eyes appear'd,
And dark the wound of his once glitt'ring breast.

‘ Crugal,’ said mighty Connal, ‘ Dudgal’s son, 15

‘ Fam’d on the hill of deer, why pale and sad,
‘ Thou breaker of the shields ? Thy sanguine face
‘ The blood could ne’er forsake through cow’rdly fear.
‘ Son of the hill, say what disturbs thy rest ?’

Dim, and in briny tears o’erwhelm’d he stood ; 20

And o’er the hero stretch’d his bloodless hand.
His feeble voice then he with faintness rais’d,
As blows the breeze o’er Lego’s reedy lake.

‘ Connal, my ghost rests on my native hills ;
‘ But Ullin’s sands contain my lifeless corpse. 25
‘ Never again with Crugal shalt thou talk,
‘ Or trace his lonely footsteps on the heath.
‘ Light as the breeze, that skims o’er Cromla’s hills,
‘ Or rolls the shady mist, I fleetly glide.—
‘ Connal ! I see the sable cloud of death ! 30
‘ It hovers, Colgar’s son, on Lena’s plains !
‘ Green Erin’s sons assuredly shall fall !
‘ Be thou far distant from the field of ghosts.’—

So spake the ghost, and like the darken’d moon,

Amidst the whistling blast he dim retir’d. 35

‘ My dark-red friend, stay,’ said great Connal, ‘ stay,

‘ Bleak Cromla’s son, put off that beam of heav’n.
‘ Say, in what lonely cave is thine abode ;
‘ Or, what green-headed hill supplies thy rest ?
‘ When from the desert drear the sons of wind, 40
‘ Forth issuing feebly, ride upon the blast ;

‘ Shall we not hear thee in the wintry storm,
 ‘ Or loudly sounding in the mountain stream ?’

Then soft-voic’d Connal, ’midst his rattling arms,
 ’Rose, and above Cuchullin struck his shield :

45

The son of battle instantly awoke :—

‘ Why, Connal, said the ruler of the car,

‘ Approachest thou amidst the gloom of night ?

‘ My spear might rush upon thee at the sound,

‘ And give Cuchullin reason to lament

50

‘ His bleeding friend.—Speak, Connal, Colgar’s son :—

‘ Speak : for thy counsel’s like the mid-day sun.’

‘ Fam’d son of Semo,’ then reply’d the chief,

‘ From his lone cave the ghost of Crugal came !

55

‘ The stars dim-twinkled thro’ his shady form,

‘ And, like a distant stream, his voice I heard.

‘ He comes a messenger of certain death,

‘ And of the dark and narrow house he speaks !

‘ Sue, Dunscáich’s chief, for peace, without delay,

‘ Or else, o’er Lena’s heath directly fly’—

60

Then said the hero : ‘ He to Connal spoke,

‘ Tho’ “ stars dim-twinkled thro’ his shady form !”

‘ Thy vision, son of Colgar, was the wind,

‘ That gave in Lena’s caves a murmur’ring sound ;

‘ Or, if the form of Crugal, why not then

65

‘ Enforce him to my sight ? Didst thou enquire

‘ The lonely cave, where rests the son of wind ?

‘ *That voice* I might discover by my sword,

‘ And all his knowledge force him to declare :—

‘ But *small* must be that knowledge !—for to-day

70

‘ Here, Connal, he was present.—Farther than

‘ Our hills he can’t have gone as yet ; who there

‘ Our *near* approaching death to him can tell ?

‘ Ghosts fly on clouds, and fleetly ride on winds,’
 Said Connal’s voice of wisdom. ‘ In their caves
 ‘ Together resting they of mortals talk.’

‘ Of mortals let them talk,’ Cuchullin said,
 ‘ Yes, e’en of ev’ry man, but Erin’s chief.
 ‘ Within their cave let them not mention *me* :
 ‘ For, ne’er will Semo’s son from Swaran fly. 80
 ‘ If fall I *must*, my monument shall rise
 ‘ ‘Midst future acclamations of my fame.
 ‘ The hunter on my stone shall shed a tear,
 ‘ And sorrow round Brágéla’s bosom dwell.
 ‘ I fear not death, but yet I fear to fly ;
 ‘ For oft’ Fingál has seen me win the field.
 ‘ Though thou, O phantom of the hill, to me
 ‘ Appear supported on thy beam of heav’n
 ‘ With hand portentous of my speedy death ;
 ‘ Yet I’ll not fly, thou feeble son of wind. 90

‘ Now, son of Colgar, go, strike Cáthbat’s shield
 ‘ Hanging between the spears : and at the sound
 ‘ To Erin’s battles let my heroes rise.
 ‘ Tho’ his approach, with sons of stormy race,
 ‘ Fingál delay ; yet we, O Colgar’s son, 95
 ‘ Shall fight, and in heroic battle die.’

Wide spreads the sound : and, as the roaring waves
 Blue-rolling break, the stormy heroes rise.
 They stood in ranks upon the gloomy heath.
 So, with surrounding branches, on the plains
 Echo the sturdy oaks to frosty streams, 100
 Their with’red foliage rustling to the wind.

Grey is the cloud-capt head of Cromla’s height,
 And morning trembles on the dusky main.

The blue-grey azure slowly swims along,
And hides the sons of Innis-fail in clouds.

105

Then said the king of dark-brown shields : ‘ Arise—
‘ Rise ye, who came from Lochlin’s roaring waves.
‘ The sons of Erin from our arms have fled—
‘ Them now o’er Lena’s heath with speed pursue. 110
‘ Morla, direct to Cormac’s hall repair,
‘ And bid them yield to Swaran’s conquering arms :
‘ Else shall the people fall into the tomb,
‘ And Ullin’s hills one silent waste be made.’

Quick as a flock of sea-fowl from the shore 115
Expell’d by billows, Lochlin’s sons arose.
Their sound was like a thousand streams, that meet
In Cona’s vale beneath the morn’s pale light
After a stormy night, high-swoll’n with rains
Constant and large they their dark eddies roll. 120

Like dark autumnal shades o’er verdant hills
The warlike chiefs of Lochlin’s echoing woods
Now gloomy, dark, successive mov’d along.
Whilst onward march’d the stately king of groves,
Tall as the stag of Morven ; on his side 125
Hung his bright shield, coruscant as the flame
Gliding along the heath in stillest night,
And by the lonely trav’ller seen ; who shakes,
When he a ghost sees sporting in the beam.

Now from the troubled main a blast dispell’d 130
The settled mist : and, like a ridge of rocks,
The warlike sons of Innis-fail appear.

‘ Go, Morla, go,’ said Lochlin’s king ; ‘ to these
‘ Our terms of peace propose ;—propose the terms

- ‘ Which we to weak-arm’d kings are wont to give, 135
- ‘ When states before our arms submissive bow ;
- ‘ When dead in war the stoutest heroes lie,
- ‘ And virgins weep upon the crimson field.’

The king of shields, great Morla, son of Swarth,
Approach’d with stately gait, and thus address’d, 140
Among less heroes, Erin’s blue-ey’d son :

- ‘ Take Swaran’s peace—the peace he gives to kings,
- ‘ When states before his arms submissive bow.
- ‘ To us surrender Ullin’s lovely plains,
- ‘ Thy spouse and dog :—thy fair and lovely spouse 145
- ‘ With breasts high heaving, and the dog more swift
- ‘ Than fleetest winds. The weakness of thy arm
- ‘ Give *these* to prove ; and live beneath our pow’r.’

Then answer’d Erin’s chief: ‘ Tell Swaran—tell
‘ That heart of pride, Cuchullin never yields. 150

- ‘ To him I give the dark-blue rolling main,
- ‘ Or tombs in Erin for his breathless host.
- ‘ The lovely sunbeam of Dunscáich ne’er shall
- ‘ A stranger’s right become ; nor ever deer
- ‘ On Lochlin’s hills before swift Luach fly.’ 155

‘ Vain ruler of the ear’, then Morla said,
‘ Wilt thou engage in combat with the king !
‘ *That king*, whose num’rous fleet of many groves
‘ Thine Isle could carry off with utmost ease !
‘ Such trifles are thy green-hill’d Ullin’s plains, 160
‘ When to the king of stormy waves compar’d !’

Then Semo’s son reply’d: ‘ In words I yield
‘ To many, Morla ; but in war, to *none*.
‘ So long as Connal and Cuchullin breathe,
‘ Fam’d Cormac’s rightful sway shall Erin own. 165

- ‘ The words of Morla, Connal, thou hast heard,
- ‘ Thou first in might, thou breaker of the shields :
- ‘ And shall thy anxious thoughts be bent on peace ?
- ‘ Why, ghost of Crugal, didst thou threaten death ?
- ‘ The dark and narrow house shall me receive, 170
- ‘ Amidst the splendid light of high renown.
- ‘ Exalt, ye sons of Innis-fail, exalt
- ‘ The spear and bend the yew ;—rush on the foe,
- ‘ As ghosts of midnight storms in darkness roar.’

Then dismal, roaring, fierce, and deep along 175
 The battle roll'd. So mist on valleys pours,
 When heav'n's calm sunshine blackest storms invade.
 As moves, before a cloud, an angry ghost
 Inclos'd in meteors of bright-flaming fire
 And grasping in his hands the stormy winds ; 180
 So moves the chief in arms before the host.

Carril of other times, far on the heath,
 Now bids the loud, shrill horn of battle sound :
 And, to give ardour to the heroes' hearts,
 Pours out his soul, and lifts the voice of song : 185

- ‘ Where,’ said the tuneful voice of martial note,
- ‘ Where is fall'n Crugal ? On the earth forgot
- ‘ He lies, and silent is the hall of shells !
- ‘ Disconsolate within the house of grief
- ‘ Sits Crugal's spouse, a stranger in the place !— 190
- ‘ But, who is she, that fronting Swaran's ranks,
- ‘ The foe defying, like a sunbeam flies ?—
- ‘ 'Tis fair Degréna, fallen Crugal's spouse
- ‘ With floating hair, dishevell'd by the wind.
- ‘ Red is her eye, and shrill her feeble voice !
- ‘ Empty and green thy Crugal now appears,
- ‘ Whose pallid form lies in the mountain-cave.

‘ As hum the mountain-bees, or evening swarms
 ‘ Of flies collected, feebly sounds his voice,
 ‘ When he approaches to the ear of sleep. 200
 ‘ But like a morning-cloud Degréna falls,
 ‘ The sword of Lochlin reeking in her side.
 ‘ Cairbar, she’s fall’n ; and ever sleeps in dust
 ‘ The rising thought of thy aspiring youth !
 ‘ She’s fall’n, O Cairbar ! Blasted are those hopes, 205
 ‘ The pleasing solace of thy youthful hours !

The mournful sound fierce Cairbar heard and forth
 In battle rush’d, in strength as ocean’s whale.
 His daughter’s fall was clear before his eyes,
 And in the midst of thousands loud he roar’d, 210
 And thro’ a son of Lochlin thrust his spear.
 From wing to wing the raging battle spread !

As roar, in Lochlin’s groves a hundred winds,
 Or raging fires amidst a hundred hills :
 With force so loud, so ruinous and vast 215
 The ranks of men in all directions fall.
 Heroes, like thistles, mows Cuchullin’s sword ;
 And Erin’s waste, by Swaran made, is large.
 Curach, and Cairbar of the bossy shield,
 Fall with huge bulk by his resistless hand. 220
 In lasting rest sleeps Morglan, and Ca-ólt,
 In his expiring moments, quiv’ring lies.
 His snow-white breast is stain’d with purple gore,
 And in the dust of his own native soil
 Lies, stiffen’d in the mud, his yellow hair. 225
 Where he had often spread the feast, he fell :—
 There too he oft’ had struck the warbling lyre,
 Whilst ’round him leap’d his bounding dogs for joy,
 And youths the bow prepared for the chase.

As from the desert bursts the stream and bears 230
 The little hills down headlong in its course,
 Whilst rocks along its banks half sunk appear :
 So Swaran still advanc'd. But yet oppos'd
 Before him stood Cuchullin like a hill,
 That, tow'ring upwards, verges to the clouds. 235
 The stormy winds with its tall pines contend,
 And on its rocks the hail falls rattling down.
 Yet still unshaken in its strength it stands
 And Cona's silent vale o'erhangs with shade.

So, in the midst of thousands, Semo's son, 240
 To shade the sons of Erin, kept his ground.
 From panting heroes round him issu'd blood,
 As from a rocky fount. But Erin falls,
 On either wing, like snow before the sun.

‘ O sons of Innis-fail,’ then Grumal said, 245
 ‘ Lochlin now conquers on the bloody field :
 ‘ Why strive we then, as reeds against the wind ?
 ‘ Why haste we not to th' hills of dark-brown hinds ?

Then, swift as Morven's stag, away he fled ;
 And, like a zigzag beam of light, his spear 250
 Him trembling follows. But associates few
 The chief of little soul in flight attend.
 In hottest fight, with martial brav'ry fir'd,
 On Lena's echoing heath they chiefly fell.

High on his studled car stood Erin's chief 255
 And laid a mighty son of Lochlin low,
 And spake in haste to Connal : ‘ Thou this arm
 ‘ To deal destruction, first of men, didst teach.
 ‘ Tho' Erin's sons, with fleetness like the wind,
 ‘ Have fled in fear, shall we not fight the foe ? 260

‘ To yonder bushy hill my living friends,
 ‘ Carril of other times, conduct with care.
 ‘ Firm as two rocks here Connal let us stand,
 ‘ And bravely cover our retreating friends.’

“ Obedient Connal mounts the car of light:— 265

They stretch their steady, strong, and bossy shields,
 In bulk and semblance like the darken’d moon,
 The shadowy daughter of the starry skies,
 When, a dun circle, slow she moves through heav’n.
 Then lab’ring, panting, struggled up the hill, 270
 Sithfædda and Dusronnal (haughty steed):—
 Like waves behind a whale, behind them rush’d the foc.

Now on the rising side of Cromla stood
 The now redue’d sad ranks of Erin’s sons.
 So lours the grove, through which has rush’d the flame 275
 More wastive made by stormy winds of night.

In silence near an oak Cuchullin stood,
 His eye with grief red-rolling, and the wind
 His bushy hair dishev’lling; when appear’d
 The scot of ocean, Moran, Fithil’s son. 280
 ‘ Ships’—loud he cry’d, ‘ ships from the lonely isle !
 ‘ There comes Fingál, shield-breaker, first of men ;
 ‘ Before whose sable prows the billows foam.
 ‘ Like sailing groves his tow’ring masts appear !’

In joy ecstatic then Cuchullin cry’d: 285
 ‘ Ye winds, that o’er my isle of lovely mist,
 ‘ Do rush ; with aid propitious swell and blow.
 ‘ Chief of the hills of hinds with speed approach
 ‘ And by thy deathful steel see thousands fall.
 ‘ To me, thy sails are as the morning-clouds ; 290
 ‘ Thy ships like heav’n’s fair light ; and thou, thyself,
 ‘ Beam’st like a meteor in the dark of night.

- How pleasant, Connal, are our coming friends !
- But night with dusky shades is gath'ring round,
- And where are now the vessels of Fingál ?
- Here, wishing for the silver moon of heaven,
- The lagging hours of darkness let us pass.'

The blust'ring winds brush'd o'er the roaring woods,
And from the rocks the rapid torrents rush'd. 300

'Round Cromla's head rain gather'd ; and the stars
With redness trembled 'midst the flying clouds.

Sad, by the margin of a sounding stream,

To which a neigh'ring tree gave answ'ring:

Sad, by the margin of this sounding stream 305

Sat Erin's chief—Fam'd Connal. Colgar's son

sat Erin's chief.—I am a Connal, Colgar's son,
With Carril of old times, were also there.

‘Unhappily is Cuckoolink’s hand,’ said the old man.

Unhappy is Cuchulinn's hand, exclaim'd
The son of Sero, 'tis in his hand his shield.

The son of Semo; since his fav'rite friend
He had no other in God's world to turn to.

* He slew, unhappy is Cuchullin's hand. 310

• Dear was thou, Ferda, to my secret breast

‘ I lov’d thee, son of Dammon, as myself.’

‘ Cuchullin, son of Seimo,’ Connal said,

‘ How fell the pow’rful breaker of the shields?’

• Well I remember Dammon's noble son,

‘ Most fair and stately was the noble youth,

‘As is the radiant rainbow on the hill’—

‘ Ferda the chief, who sway’d a hundred hills,

‘From Albion came.—In Muri’s martial hall

‘ He learn’d the sword, and gain’d Cuchullin’s love. 320

‘ Together to the busy chase we mov’d

‘ And in the heath our resting-place was one

‘ Espos’id to Cairbar, chief of Ullin’s plains.

“Dengala with vaulted bonytch shone:

‘ But in her heart (the dwelling-place of pride) 325
 ‘ That sunbeam, Damman’s noble son, she lov’d.
 “ Half of the herd,” the white-arm’d woman cry’d,
 “ Dark Cairbar, give me; for within your halls
 “ I’ll stay no longer. Give me half the herd.”

“ My mountain-herds Cuchullin shall divide, 330
 “ Whose breast,” said Cairbar, “ is of justice form’d.
 “ Thou false, thou fairest beauty, hence—depart.”

‘ When, as requested, I the lots had made;
 ‘ One snow-white bull remain’d. To Cairbar this
 ‘ I gave; and hence Deugala’s wrath arose. 335

‘ Fixing her plaintive eyes on Damman’s son,
 “ Cuchullin pains my soul!” The fair one cry’d.
 “ Either his death must reach my eager ear,
 “ Or, over me loud Lubar’s streams shall roll.
 “ My pallid ghost shall haunt thy lone retreat, 340
 “ And this indignity severely mourn!
 “ His blood pour out, or pierce this heaving breast.”

“ Deugala, how?” “ The bright-hair’d youth reply’d:
 “ How shall I slay Cuchullin, Semo’s son!
 “ Against the friend of all my secret thoughts 345
 “ Shall I now lift my unprovoked sword?”
 “ Three days successive she before him wept,
 “ And, on the fourth, to fight he gave consent.”

“ Deugala, with my friend I now will fight—
 “ But by his sword,” exclaim’d he, “ may I fall! 350
 “ When wand’ring on the hill amidst the chase,
 “ How could my eyes Cuchullin’s tomb behold!”

‘ On Muri’s hills in combat then we met.

‘ Our friendly swords avoid a deadly wound.
 ‘ Beside the polish’d helmets down they slide, 355
 ‘ And clashing sound upon the slippery shields.
 ‘ Hard by Deugala stood with taunting air,
 ‘ And, smiling, to the son of Damman said :
 “ Weak is thy arm, thou sunbeam of green youth,
 “ Of years unequal to the manly steel. 360
 “ In strength Cuchullin rivals Malmor’s rock :—
 “ The palm of vict’ry yield to Semo’s son.”

“ To me the youth, in tears, then fault’ring said :’
 “ Lift up thy bossy shield, Cuchullin, high—
 “ From thy friend’s hand thyself with care defend. 365
 “ With loads of grief my lab’ring soul is press’d ;
 “ For, by my hand the chief of men must fall.”

“ Like wind within a chinky rock I sigh’d !
 ‘ ’Twas then my edged steel I lifted high,
 ‘ And down the shining beam of battle fell,
 ‘ The dearest of Cuchullin’s friends—and since 370
 ‘ He fell, unhappy is Cuchullin’s hand.’—

‘ Thy tale is mournful,’ hoary Carril said :
 ‘ Back to old times, and deeds of other years,
 ‘ Son of the ear, my thinking soul it sends. 375
 ‘ Oft’ I have heard of Comal, by whose hands
 ‘ Fell his lov’d friend. Yet vict’ry on his steel
 ‘ Always attended. When to war he strode,
 ‘ The battle in his presence was consum’d.

‘ Comal, the chieftain of a hundred hills, 380
 ‘ From Albion came : and of a thousand streams
 ‘ Partook his deer. A thousand sounding rocks
 ‘ Reply’d in echo to his hunting cry.
 ‘ With youthful mildness shone his radiant face,
 ‘ And death to heroes was his fatal hand. 385

- One was his love ; and she of matchless charms,
- Great Conloch's daughter ! She, among the maids,
- With brilliant splendour, like a sunbeam, shone.
- Her jetty hair outv'y'd the raven wing :
- Her dogs too were unrivall'd in the chase : 390
- Her bow-string sounded on the forest winds.
- Whilst she her soul on Comal stedfast fix'd,
- Their eyes of love with conscious glances met.—
- One in the chase was their unvaried course,
- Whilst mutual converse eas'd their anxious breasts. 395

‘ But, Gormal, gloomy Ardven’s swarthy chief,
‘ The hapless Comal’s foe, the maid too lov’d ;
‘ And her lone steps awaited in the heath.

‘ ‘Tir’d with the chase, one day in Ronan’s cave
‘ (The wonted haunt of Comal), when close inist 400
‘ Their friends had intercepted from their view ;
‘ Comal and Conloch’s daughter met alone.—
‘ There hung his arms, of thongs a hundred shields ;
‘ And there a hundred helms of sounding steel.

“ Rest here, Galvina, lovely fair !” ‘ he said,’ 405
“ Thou brightest ornament of Ronan’s cave:
“ A bounding deer appears on Mora’s brow.
“ I’ll it pursue; but shortly will return.”

"I fear," she said, "dark Grumal, my dark foe,
"Who haunts the cave of Ronan. 'Midst the arms 410
"I'll rest awhile.—But soon, my love, return."

‘ The deer of Mora he direct pursu’d.—
‘ But Conloch’s daughter, his pledg’d faith to try,
‘ Her snow-white sides with his bright armour deck’d ;
‘ And march’d from Ronan’s cave with martial gait.— 415

‘ Soon Comal spy’d what he supposed his foe,
 ‘ And soon with jealous rage his heart beat high :
 ‘ His colour chang’d, and darkness dimm’d his eyes.
 ‘ From his drawn bow the winged arrow flew :—
 ‘ But, ah ! its course ! Galvina fell in blood. 420
 ‘ With wildness in his steps, he ran in haste
 ‘ To the lone rock, and Conloch’s daughter call’d.
 ‘ No answer in the lonely rock is heard—
 “ My love, where art thou ?” still in vain he cry’d.—

‘ At last, he spy’d around the feather’d dart 425
 ‘ Her heaving heart just bursting into death !
 “ O Conloch’s daughter, is it thou ?” he cry’d.
 ‘ Then, down he sunk upon her fainting breast !

‘ The hapless pair were by the hunters found :—
 ‘ He afterwards in silence walk’d the hill : 430
 ‘ But near the shady dwelling of his love
 ‘ Many and mournful were his lonely steps.

‘ When from the ocean came the hostile fleet,
 ‘ He boldly fought, and soon the strangers fled.
 ‘ In quest of death, he travers’d o’er the field ; 435
 ‘ But, by whose hand could mighty Comal fall ?
 ‘ Down from his arm the dark-brown shield he threw,
 ‘ And soon an arrow found his manly breast.
 ‘ Beside the place, where sounds the swelling surge,
 ‘ With his once lov’d Galvina Comal sleeps. 440
 ‘ The sailor, bounding o’er the northern waves,
 ‘ With eager eyes their verdant tombs surveys.’

Fingal:

AN ANCIENT EPIC POEM.

ARGUMENT.

CUCHULLIN, pleased with the story of Carril, insists with that bard for more of his songs. He relates the actions of Fingal in Lochlin, and the death of Agandecca, the beautiful sister of Swaran. He had scarce finished, when Calmar, the son of Matha, who had advised the first battle, came wounded from the field, and told them of Swaran's design to surprise the remains of the Irish army. He himself proposes to withstand singly the whole force of the enemy, in a narrow pass; till the Irish should make good their retreat. Cuchullin, touched with the gallant proposal of Calmar, resolves to accompany him, and orders Carril to carry off the few, that remained of the Irish. Morning comes, Calmar dies of his wounds; and, the ships of the Caledonians appearing, Swaran gives over the pursuit of the Irish, and returns to oppose Fingal's landing. Cuchullin ashamed, after his defeat, to appear before Fingal; retires to the cave of Tura. Fingal engages the enemy, puts them to flight; but the coming on of the night prevents the victory from being decisive. The King, who had observed the gallant behaviour of his grandson Oscar, gives him his advice concerning his conduct in peace and war. He recommends to him to place the example of his fathers before his eyes; as the best model for his conduct; which introduces the episode concerning Fainasollis, the daughter of the king of Craca, whom Fingal had taken under his protection, in his youth. Fillan and Oscar are dispatched to observe the motions of the enemy by night; Gaul the son of Morni desires the command of the army in the next battle, which Fingal promises to give him.—Some general reflections of the poet close the third day.

BOOK III.

- ‘ DELIGHTFUL is the song ! Cuchullin said,
- ‘ And lovely are the tales of other times !
- ‘ In calmness they resemble morning-dew
- ‘ Upon the hill of roes, when on its sides
- ‘ Faint shines the sun ; whilst in the vale below
- ‘ Settled and blue the spacious lake appears.

‘ Again, O Carril, raise thy tuneful voice,
 ‘ And let the song of Tura swell thy notes
 ‘ Which loudly echo’d in my festive halls ;
 ‘ When present sat Fingál, the king of shields 10
 ‘ And glow’d with transport at his father’s deeds.’

‘ Fingál! thou man of battle,’ Carril said,
 ‘ Early in arms thy deeds conspicuous shone.
 ‘ When still thy youth with maid-like beauty glow’d,
 ‘ Proud Lochlin’s sons were in thy wrath consum’d. 15
 ‘ They scorn’d the hero’s fair and bloomy face ;
 ‘ But death abode in his destructive hands.
 ‘ As tolls the tide of Lora strong he stood,
 ‘ Whilst roar’d his followers, like a thousand streams.
 ‘ They Lochlin’s king, in battle, captive took ; 20
 ‘ But soon restor’d him to his trembling fleet.
 ‘ His heart elate with pride vexation swell’d,
 ‘ And this young hero’s death his gloomy soul
 ‘ Conspir’d. For, mighty Starno’s stormy strength,
 ‘ None, ‘till Fingál, was able to subduc. 25

‘ ‘Midst Lochlin’s groves, within his hall of shells,
 ‘ Sat Starno, and hoar-headed Snivan call’d,
 ‘ That round the ring of Loda often sung,
 ‘ When, list’ning to his cry, the stone of pow’r
 ‘ To vict’ry turn’d the fortune of the field. 30

“ Go, hoary Snivan,” “ then dark Starno said,’
 “ To Ardven’s sea-surrounded rocks repair.
 “ Tell sum’d Fingál, the king of desert isles,
 “ The fairest chief of all his num’rous train ;
 “ To him my daughter (tell him) I present : 35
 “ The loveliest maid that heaves the breast of snow !
 “ White are her arms as foam my rolling waves :
 “ Her princely soul is generous and mild.

“ With his choice heroes quickly let him come
 “ To the fair daughter of the secret hall.” 40

“ To Albion’s windy hills then Snivan went,
 “ And with him, straight, bright-hair’d Fingál return’d.
 “ Before him bounding on the northern waves
 “ His kindled soul with eager transport flew.
 “ Welcome,” ‘ said dark-brown Starno,’ comes the king 45
 “ Of Morven’s hills:—ye too, his heroes strong.
 “ Sons of the lonely island, *welcome* all.
 “ Three days ye first shall feast within my halls,
 “ And then three days my forest boars pursue:
 “ That thence your mighty fame may fly abroad, 50
 “ To reach the daughter of the secret hall.”

“ Bent on revenge, the stormy king of snow,
 “ Their death designing, gave the feast of shells.
 “ Fingál, yet doubtful of the treach’rous foe,
 “ In arms of steel still kept himself secure. 55
 “ The sons of death o’erwhelm’d with treinbling dread,
 “ The hero’s sight eluded. But the joy
 “ Of sweetest tones sounds from their trembling lyres.
 “ In praise of mighty heroes, or of love
 “ With heaving breasts, the bards commence the song. 60
 “ There present stood Fingál’s own tuneful bard,
 “ Ullin of Cona’s hill, with sweetest voice.
 “ In noblest strains he prais’d the snow-white maid,
 “ And also sung of Morven’s mighty chief.
 “ The daughter of snow o’erheard the matchless strains, 65
 “ And left the mansion of her secret sigh—
 “ In all her beauty forth at once she came,
 “ Bright as the moon sprung from an eastern cloud.
 “ Love circled round her radiant as the light:
 “ Her steps were like the music of sweet songs. 70
 “ When she beheld the youth, love seiz’d her breast,
 “ And, but for him, her soul in secret sigh’d.

‘ On him in secret her blue eyes she roll’d,
 ‘ And Morven’s chief in ecstacy she blest.

‘ At length with all it’s beams the third day came, 75
 ‘ And bright illum’d the shady wood of boars.
 ‘ Forth mov’d the dark-brow’d Starno, and Fingál
 ‘ King of the orbed shields. They in the chase
 ‘ Spent half the day ; and, red with Gormal’s blood
 ‘ Appear’d Fingál’s dread spear, on their return. 80

‘ With blue eyes rolling ’midst a flood of tears
 ‘ Came Starno’s daughter with her voice of love,
 ‘ And thus to Morven’s king herself address’d :
 “ Trust not, Fingál, thou chief of high descent,
 “ To Starno’s heart of pride. For, in that grove, 85
 “ By his command, his chiefs in ambush lie.
 “ Beware then how thou tread’st the wood of death.
 “ But, O remember—Agandecca’s hopes,
 “ Son of the hill, on thee for safety fix !
 “ From my enraged father’s deadly wrath. 90
 “ O king of windy Morven, me protect !”

‘ Yet, still, the youth with unconcern went on,
 ‘ His valiant heroes ranking by his side.
 ‘ The sons of death fell by his mighty hand,
 ‘ And loudly echo’d Gormal’s verdant groves. 95

Conven’d in front of Starno’s halls then stood
 The sons of chase returned from the hills.
 The king’s dark brows were louring as the clouds ;
 His eyes like meteors in the nightly gloom.
 “ Fair Agandecca,” then he cries aloud, 100
 “ To her lov’d king of Morven hither bring.
 “ His hand is stained with my people’s blood,
 “ And her instructions were not dropt in vain.”

‘ With eyes red rolling in her tears, she came.
 ‘ With raven-locks loose floating in the air, 105
 ‘ Her white breasts heaving with a thousand sighs
 ‘ (So swells protuberant streamy Lubar’s foam) :
 ‘ She came—and Starno pierc’d her side with steel—
 ‘ And prostrate on the ground the fair one fell ;
 ‘ So, when thro’ all the grove still silence reigns, 110
 ‘ And echoes deepen in the winding vale ;
 ‘ From Ronan’s rocks descends a wreath of snow.

‘ Fingál then strictly ey’d his valiant chiefs—
 ‘ His valiant chiefs directly flew to arms.
 ‘ The gloomy choice of certain death or flight 115
 ‘ The roaring battle then to Lochlin left.
 ‘ The maid of raven-hair now pale in death
 ‘ Secure within his bounding ship he clos’d.
 ‘ On Ardven high her stately tomb ascends,
 ‘ And loudly roar the billows of the main
 ‘ Round Agandecca’s silent, dark abode.’ 120

‘ May bliss attend her soul’ Cuchullin said,
 ‘ And blessed be the mouth of sweetest song !
 ‘ Strong was Fingál, when fir’d with youthful blood,
 ‘ And strong remains his potent arm of age ! 125
 ‘ Before the king of echoing Morven’s hills
 ‘ Again shall Lochlin fall upon the field.—
 ‘ Forth from a cloud, O moon, now dart thy face ;
 ‘ Light his white sails upon the wave of night.
 ‘ And, if on yonder louring cloud there sit 130
 ‘ A pow’rful spirit clad with heav’ly strength ;
 ‘ From all the secret dangers of the rock
 ‘ His dark ships turn, thou rider of the storm.’

In these, or words like these, Cuchullin spoke,
 Where sounds the mountain-stream ; when up the hill 135

Came Calmar slowly, Matha's wounded son.
 Forth from the field, besmear'd with purple blood
 He came supported by his bending spear.
 The arm of battle is no longer strong,
 But martial vigour still his soul retains.

140

‘ Welcome, O son of Matha,’ Connal said,
 ‘ Thou comest welcome to thy faithful friends !
 ‘ From that steel'd breast, a stranger still to fear,
 ‘ Why bursteth now the heaving, broken sigh ?—

‘ And never,—then the bleeding warrior cry'd, 145
 ‘ No—never, Connal, chief of pointed steel,
 ‘ Will fear assail it. Cheer'd with martial roar,
 ‘ My soul still brightens as the danger grows.
 ‘ Steel'd was my race,—my fathers never fear'd.

‘ In Cormac first my race illustrious sprung,
 ‘ Who sportive stem'd the raging storms of waves.
 ‘ His black skiff bounded on the restless main,
 ‘ And brush'd along as blows the winged blast.

‘ A spirit once embroil'd the dusky night—
 ‘ Seas swell and rocks resound in bellowing strife; 155
 ‘ Whilst clouds along by roaring winds are driv'n,
 ‘ And forked light'ning flies on wings of fire !
 ‘ He fear'd, and came to land :—yet forth again,
 ‘ Abash'd and blushing that he fear'd at all,
 ‘ Among the rolling billows bravely rush'd; 160
 ‘ Resolv'd to find the boist'rous son of wind.
 ‘ The bounding bark three youths with caution guide,
 ‘ Whilst he, with sword unsheathe'd, intrepid stood.
 ‘ Now, when the low-hung vapour pass'd along,
 ‘ He boldly seiz'd it by the curling head, 165
 ‘ And ransack'd its dark womb with glitt'ring steel.

‘ The son of wind forthwith forsook the air,
 ‘ And, straight, the welcome moon and stars return.

‘ Such was the boldness of my dauntless race !
 ‘ And, like his fathers, firm is Calmar’s soul. 170
 ‘ Far from th’ uplifted sword fell danger flies,
 ‘ And fortune favours those, who boldly dare.

‘ But now, sons of green valley’d Erin, rise ;
 ‘ And quick from Lena’s bloody heath retire.
 ‘ The sad remainder of our friends collect, 175
 ‘ And haste to join the sword of great Fingál.
 ‘ The sound of Lochlin’s quick advancing arms
 ‘ I heard ; but Calmar will remain and fight.
 ‘ My friends, such boldness shall attend my voice,
 ‘ As if I led up thousands in my train. 180
 ‘ But bear me, son of Seino, on thy mind !
 ‘ Bear on thy mem’ry Calmar’s lifeless corpse !
 ‘ When wasted is the field by fierce Fingál,
 ‘ My bones near some renowned stone inter.
 ‘ So, shall my name to future times descend, 185
 ‘ And Calmar’s mother joy o’er that fam’d stone.’

‘ No : son of Matha,’ then Cuchullin said,
 ‘ No—never will I leave thee to thy fate.
 ‘ Unequal combats me new pleasures give,
 ‘ And dangers but enlarge my rising soul. 190
 ‘ Carril of other times and Connal, hence
 ‘ Erin’s remaining, sorrowing sons convey ;
 ‘ And, when the bloody contest is no more,
 ‘ Seek our pale corpses in this narrow pass.
 ‘ For, near this oak, whilst hosts on hosts engage, 195
 ‘ In streaming fight intrepid we shall stand.
 ‘ O’er Lena’s heath with feet like wind now fly,
 ‘ O son of Fithil, and inform Fingál.

- ‘ Tell him that lab’ring Erin is entrall’d,
- ‘ And bid the king of Morven march with speed. 200
- ‘ Sudden let him appear as in a storm
- ‘ On hills of grass forth welcome beams the sun.’

Grey breaks the morn on Cromla’s hazy heights,
When lo ! the sons of sea ascend the hill.

- ‘ To meet them in the pride of kindling soul, 205
- ‘ Forth Calmar stood; but pale appear’d his face,
- ‘ And on his father’s spear the warrior lean’d—
That spear, which he from Lara’s hall had brought,
When sadly mourn’d his mother’s anxious soul.
- ‘ But, like a leaning tree on Cona’s plains, 210
- ‘ Downwards the fading hero slowly falls.
- ‘ As, firm but lonely, in a sandy vale
Appears a rock ; whilst on its durant sides
Loud roar the waves, and round its foam-capt head
The hills resoun: so dark Cuchullin stands. 215

Now from the ocean clad with azure grey
The white sail’d vessels of Fingál appear.
On rolling billows, as they stately ride,
High stand their grove-like masts, and nod by turns.

- ‘ These Swaran viewing from the airy hill, 220
- ‘ Direct from Erin’s sons he turn’d his course.
- ‘ As thro’ the hundred isles of Inistore
The ebbing tide rolls roaring to the main ;
So loud, immense, and vast now Lochlin’s sons
Return’d against the king of desert hills. 225
- ‘ But bending, weeping, sorrowful and slow,
And dragging his long spear upon the ground,
Cuchullin, straightway, sunk in Cromla’s wood ;
And there remain’d to mourn his late fall’n friends.
- ‘ He fear’d the presence of Fingál : for, he 230
- ‘ Was wont to greet him from the fields of fame.

‘ How many there, of my brave heroes, lie !
 ‘ The chiefs, once-glorious chiefs of Innis-fail !
 ‘ They who rejoiced in the festive hall,
 ‘ When, echoing loud, arose the sound of shells ! 235
 ‘ No more shall I their voice hear in the chase
 ‘ Or find their footsteps in the shady heath !
 ‘ Alas, my friends, to me for ever lost !—
 ‘ Pale, silent, low, on bloody beds they lie !—
 ‘ Ye late departed spirits, on his heath 240
 ‘ Cuchullin met ; or, riding on the wind,
 ‘ Hold converse with him, whilst with roaring blast
 ‘ The rustling tree of Tura’s cave resounds.
 ‘ Obscure and far remote I *there* shall lie,
 ‘ By future bards unnotic’d and unsung ; 245
 ‘ Nor shall the grisly stone my name record.

‘ Mourn me, Bragela, with the silent dead ;
 ‘ For, now departed is my once-great fame.’

These were Cuchullin’s words, when in the woods
 Of shadowy Cromla, fill’d with grief he sunk. 250

Fingál before him stretched his glitt’ring lance,
 Tall in his ship ; and dreadful gleam’d the steel.
 So, death’s green meteor, when in Malmor’s heath
 It sets, the lonely traveller strikes with dread ;
 And the broad moon in heav’n is dark and wan. 255

‘ The battle is now over,’ said the king,
 ‘ And I behold the blood of my allies !
 ‘ Sad is the heath of Lena ! and the oaks
 ‘ Mournful appear on Cromla’s desert hills.
 ‘ For, *there* have fall’n the hunters in their strength ! 260
 ‘ And Semo’s valiant son is now no more !
 ‘ Ryno and Fillan—haste, my sons and sound
 ‘ The horn of war, the signal of Fingál :

‘ Haste to the shore—ascend the neighb’ring hill,
 ‘ And call the children of the dark’ning foe. 265
 ‘ From Lamdarg’s grave, the chief of other times,
 ‘ The hostile forces call without delay.
 ‘ Let your stout voices, like your fathers’, sound,
 ‘ When rushing in his strength he meets the foe.
 ‘ Here wait I for the dark and mighty man :—
 ‘ On Lena’s shore for Swaran here I wait.
 ‘ Then let him, with his num’rous race approach :
 ‘ For strong in battle are fall’n Lena’s friends.’

Quick as the light’ning, then fair Ryno flew,
 And Fillan dark as autumn’s gloomy shade.— 275
 Loud sounds their voice o’er Lena’s shady heath :
 Fingál’s shrill horn the sons of ocean heard.
 As, from the realm of snow, returning rolls
 With ro’ring eddy, ocean’s tumbling floods ;
 So, strong, dark, sudden, Lochlin’s sons came down. 280
 Clad in the dismal pride of sounding arms
 The king in front of his large host appears.
 His dark-brown face with fiery anger burns,
 And, red with martial vigour, rolls his eye.

The approach of Starno’s son Fingal beheld, 285
 And Agendecca to his mind recurr’d.
 For, his white-bosom’d sister (hapless maid !)
 Swaran, with tears of youth, had sadly mourn’d.
 Ullin, the tuneful bard, he therefore sent
 To bid him welcome to the feast of shells. 290
 For, pleasant on Fingál’s great soul return’d
 The mem’ry of the first of all his loves.

With aged steps then hoary Ullin went,
 And spoke to Starno’s son with softest voice :
 ‘ O thou, that dwell’st afar, with thy loud waves 295

‘ Surrounded like a rock, thee to the feast
 ‘ The king invites: come, pass the day in rest.
 ‘ To-morrow, Swaran, let us meet in strife
 ‘ Of spears and swords, and break the echoing shields !’

‘ To-day,’ said Starno’s wrathful son, ‘ we break 300
 ‘ The echoing shields.—To-morrow will we spread
 ‘ *My* feasts; and low on earth Fingál shall lie.’

‘ And let his feast then be to-morrow spread’,
 Fingál said with a smile; ‘ for, O my sons,
 ‘ Our might *to-day* shall break the sounding shields. 305
 ‘ Stand, Ossian, near my arm: and thy dread sword,
 ‘ Gaul, lift thou up: and bend thy crooked yew,
 ‘ O Fergus. Fillan, throw thy lance thro’ heav’n.
 ‘ Your bossy shields lift like the darken’d moon,
 ‘ And deadly meteors be your fatal spears ! 310
 ‘ In fame’s high-way me steadfastly pursue,
 ‘ And in fierce battle emulate my deeds.’

As roar a hundred winds on Morven’s plain;
 Or, from a hundred hills the swelling streams;
 As over heaven the clouds successive fly; 315
 As meets the raging main the desert shores:
 So vast, so roaring, terrible and wild,
 On Lena’s echoing heath the armies mix’d.
 As, when th’ impregnate cloud on Cona bursts,
 Loud, rattling roars the thunder of dark night, 320
 And ghosts, by thousands, shriek and rend the air.
 So o’er the spacious hills the people groan.

Fingál rush’d on, in strength as Trenmor’s ghost,
 When he, in whirlwind-blasts, to Morven comes
 With pride, his sons to visit. [On their hills 325
 The oaks resound, and down before him fall

The stubborn rocks.]—My father, in his hand
 With crimson stain'd, like lightning, whi'l'd his sword.
 The battles of his youth he bears in mind,
 And the hot field is wasted in his course. 330

On, Ryno, swift as lightning went,
 And Gaul appear'd with his dark, deadly brow.
 Fleet as the wind, bold Fergus forward rush'd,
 And Fillan darken'd like the mountain-mist. 335
 Exulting in the king's great, wastive strength,
 Myself descended as a sturdy rock.
 Deaths by my fatal arm were multiply'd,
 And dismal gleam'd, 'midst many a death, my sword.
 Not *then* so grey appear'd my hoary locks,
 Nor trembled yet my hands of age infirm: 340
 My eyes were not, as *now*, in darkness clos'd,
 Nor were my feet inactive in the race.

Who can relate the numbers of the slain,
 Or who describe the heroes' mighty deeds;
 When Lochlin's sons Fingál, in wrath, consum'd? 345
 Groans swell'd on groans: from hill to hill they roar'd,
 Till night with sable clouds had cover'd all.
 Pallid, and staring like a herd of deer,
 On Lena's heights the sons of Lochlin meet.

Where Lubar gently rolls its lucid stream 350
 We sat, and heard the harp of sprightly sound.
 Fingál himself was nearest to the foe,
 And songs of tuneful bards attentive heard.
 His godlike race, the chiefs of other times,
 In concert with the harp were sweetly sung. 355
 Whilst on the days of other years he thought,
 Supported by his shield sat Morven's king;
 The wind loud whistling in his hoary hair.

And near him, leaning on his bending spear
 My young, my lovely Oscar glowing stood. 360
 Whilst he the king of Morven view'd, his soul
 Swell'd with reflections on the hero's deeds.

‘ Son of my son, O Oscar, said the king,
 ‘ Thou pride of youth, I saw thy shining sword
 ‘ And gloried in my race. Our father's fame 365
 ‘ Pursue, and tread the path they trod in war.

‘ When Trenmor liv'd, the first of mighty chiefs ;
 ‘ And Trathal, who to heroes gave descent :
 ‘ They fought the battle in their days of youth
 ‘ With growing fame, and are the song of bards. 370
 ‘ O Oscar, bend the strong, but spare the weak.—
 ‘ Against thy people's foes be thou, in strength,
 ‘ A stream of many tides ; but like the gale,
 ‘ That moves the grass, to those who ask thy aid.
 ‘ So Trenmor liv'd ; such Trathal also was ; 375
 ‘ And such has been Fingal. My ready arm
 ‘ Redress'd the injur'd, and behind my steel,
 ‘ As lightning beaming, found the weak repose.

‘ In youth's meridian bloom, O Oscar, once
 ‘ Like thee I shone, when Tainasollis came, 380
 ‘ That radiant sunbeam, mildest light of love,
 ‘ Daughter of Craca's king.—From Cona's heath
 ‘ I then return'd, and few were in my train.—
 ‘ Far off appear'd a white-sail'd boat ; like mist
 ‘ To us it seem'd, that rode on ocean's blast. 385
 ‘ It soon approach'd ;—and soon we saw the fair,
 ‘ Whose snow-white bosom turgid heav'd with sighs.
 ‘ Wild blew the wind in her loose, dusky hair,
 ‘ And down her rosy cheeks flow'd pearly tears.
 ‘ Daughter of beauty,” ‘ calm I said, “ what woe 390

“ Swells that fair breast? Can I, though young, defend
 “ Thee, daughter of the sea? My sword in war
 “ Is not unmatch'd, but yet my heart is firm.”

“ With bursting sighs the fair one then reply'd :

“ To thee, O chief of mighty men, I fly.

395

“ To thee I fly, O prince of sounding shells,

“ And firm supporter of the feeble hand.

“ The mighty king of Craca's echoing isle

“ Me own'd the sunbeam of his noble race.

“ And often to the sighs of hapless love

400

“ For Fainasollis, Cromla's hills reply'd.

“ Me, Craca's daughter, Sora's chief (whose sword

“ Beams as the light upon the warrior's side)

“ Beheld and lov'd. But sably lours his brow

“ And tempests rage within his stormy soul.

405

“ Upon the rolling sea from him I fly,

“ But Sora's chief without relent pursues.”

“ Rest thou,” ‘ I said,’ “ behind my bossy shield—

“ Rest thou in peace, thou mildest beam of light.

“ If great in strength, as soul, Fingal should prove,

410

“ A speedy flight waits Sora's gloomy chief.

“ In some lone cave thee, daughter of the sea,

“ Fingal might hide, but never does he fly :

“ For, where the danger threatens, *there* I haste

“ Exulting in the thick'ning storm of spears.”

415

“ Upon her cheeks of love the tear I saw ;

“ And thence compassion rose for Craca's fair.

“ Soon, like a dreadful wave afar, appear'd

“ The ship of stormy Borbar.—O'er the sea

“ His masts high-bent behind their sheets of snow.

420

“ On either side white roll the curling waves

“ And all the strength of ocean echo round.—

“ Come thou,” ‘ I said :’—“ thou rider of the storm,

“ Come from the roaring main, and in my hall,
“ The stranger’s refuge, now partake the feast.” 425
‘ Whilst by my side the trembling damsels stood,
‘ He drew the fatal bow, and down she fell.
“ Unerring is thy hand,” ‘ I said ; but soon
‘ The foe prov’d feeble. For, in angry strife
‘ We fought, nor feeble was the strife of death. 430
‘ He sunk beneath my sword : and, in two tombs
‘ Of stones, these hapless children fall’n we laid.

‘ Such, in my youth, O Oscar, have I been ;
‘ And, when in years, resemble thou Fingál.
‘ The battle never seek ; yet, when it comes, 435
‘ Maintain thy ground, nor cow’rdly turn away.
‘ Fillan, and Oscar of the dark-brown hair,
‘ Ye children of the race, fly o’er the heath
‘ Of roaring winds, and Lochlin’s sons survey.
‘ Far off, like echoing Cona’s turbid storms,
‘ I hear the noise of their embroiling fear. 440
‘ Go—lest along the northern waves they fly,
‘ And thence evade the vengeance of my sword.
‘ For, prostrate on the sable bed of death,
‘ Lie many chieftains of green Erin’s race. 445
‘ The children of the storm on earth are low :
‘ The sons of echoing Cromla’s shadowy plains.’

Like two dark clouds this brace of heroes flew—
Two dusky clouds, the ears of airy ghosts ;
When air’s dark children with their horrors come 450
To frighten hapless men in deserts lone.

”Twas then that Gaul, the son of Morni, stood
Like a tall rock in night, the test of storms.
Up to the stars his radiant jav’lin shone
With rays effulgent, whilst, like many streams 455

In strength conjoin'd, his voice in power was heard :

- ‘ Fingál, thou son of battle, king of shells !
- ‘ Let now the tuneful bards of many songs
- ‘ Sooth Erin’s warlike friends to sweet repose.
- ‘ And sheath at length thy sword of death, Fingál, 460
- ‘ And let thy people fight.—Of fame depriv’d
- ‘ Away we wither. For our mighty king
- ‘ Breaker of shields, in war appears, *alone*.
- ‘ When morning beams with silver rays, retire ;
- ‘ And at a distance our great deeds behold. 465
- ‘ That bards hereafter may proclaim my fame,
- ‘ The strength of Morni’s son let Lochlin feel.
- ‘ Fingál, from times of old, thy noble race
- ‘ Observ’d this custom. This too thou hast done,
- ‘ Thou king of swords, in battles of the spear.’ 470

‘ I glory, son of Morni, in thy fame,’

- Reply’d Fingál ! ‘ exert thyself in fight.
- ‘ But, in the midst of danger, thee to aid,
- ‘ Near thee my faithful spear shall still remain.
- ‘ Raise, raise the voice, ye sons of tuneful song, 475
- ‘ And sweetly lull me into balmy sleep ;
- ‘ Whilst here amidst the wind of night I rest.
- ‘ And if among the children of thy land,
- ‘ Fair Agandecca, thou be also near :—
- ‘ If thou, exalted on a cloud of wind, 480
- ‘ Midst Lochlin’s ma ts high-shrouded chance to sit :
- ‘ Come to my dreams, my fair one, and thy face
- ‘ Of matchless brightness to my soul unveil.’

In grandest concert of symphonies sound

- Then many a harp, and many a voice arose. 485
- They sung the great atchievements of Fingal,
- And sweetly prais’d the hero’s noble race.
- Sometimes too on the lovely sound was heard
- The name of Ossian, now the child of woe.

Oft' have I fought in battles of the spear 490
And often won:—but now forlorn and dark,
In tears, and blind, I walk with little men.
Thee, O Fingal, with all thy martial race
No more I see! The wild roes tamely browse
On the green tomb of Morven's mighty king! 495
Blest be thy soul, thou mighty king of swords,
The most renowned on high Cona's hills!

END OF BOOK THIRD.

Fingal :

AN ANCIENT EPIC POEM.

ARGUMENT.

THE action of the poem being suspended by night, Ossian takes that opportunity of relating his own actions at the lake of Lego; and his courtship of Everallin, who was the mother of Oscar, and had died some time before the expedition of Fingal to Ireland. Her ghost appears to him and tells him that Oscar, who had been sent, the beginning of the night, to observe the enemy, was engaged with an advanced party and almost overpowered. Ossian relieves his son; and an alarm is given to Fingal of the approach of Swaran. The king rises, calls his army together; and, as he had promised the preceding night, devolves the command on Gaul, the son of Morni; while he himself, after charging his sons to behave gallantly and defend his people, retires to a hill, from whence he could have a view of the battle. The battle joins. The poet relates Oscar's great actions. But, when Oscar (in conjunction with his father) conquered in one wing, Gaul, who was attacked by Swaran in person, was on the point of retreating in the other. Fingal sends Ullin, his Lard, to encourage him with a war song; but, notwithstanding, Swaran prevails, and Gaul and his army are obliged to give way. Fingal, descending from the hill, rallies them again: Swaran desists from the pursuit, possesses himself of a rising ground, restores the ranks and waits the approach of Fingal. The king, having encouraged his men, gives the necessary orders, and renewes the battle. Cuchullin, who with his friend Connal, and Carril his bard, had retired to the cave of Tura, hearing the noise, came to the brow of the hill, which overlooked the field of battle, where he saw Fingal engaged with the enemy. He, being hindred by Connal from joining Fingal, who was himself upon the point of obtaining a complete victory, sends Carril to congratulate the king of his success.

BOOK IV.

WHO, from the mountain with the dulcet song
Like show'ry Lena's radiant bow, descends?
It is the maid with softest voice of love,
And arms of snow, of Toscar's noble race.—
Oft' hast thou heard my song, and oft' the tear
Of sympathetic beauty freely fell.

Dost thou, to witness Oscar's noble feats,
 Down to the battle of thy people come ?
 When shall I cease, near echoing Cona's streams
 In lonely grief, to pour my plaintive song ? 10
 Amidst loud woe my years have been consum'd,
 And sorrow shades the evening of my days.

I was not, fair of snowy hand, so blind,
 So mournful, so obscure, and so forlorn,
 When Everallin on me look'd, and lov'd. 15
 Sweet Everallin, with the dark-brown hair,
 The maid with snowy breast, from Cormac sprung !
 To her a thousand heroes made their suit ;
 But to a thousand she deny'd her love.
 The sons of sword she treated with disdain, 20
 For Ossian graceful reigned in her eyes.
 Where Lego's surge expands its sable sheet,
 Thither I went to see the charming maid.
 Twelve sons of stately Morven form'd my train.

Soon we to Branno came, the strangers' friend, 25
 Branno of sounding mail, in battle strong.
 'From whence,' said he, 'arrive those arms of steel ?'
 'Not easy is the task to win the fair,
 'Who has deny'd green Erin's blue-ey'd sons.
 'But blest be thou, the son of great Fingal ; 30
 'The maid is happy, that awaits thy hand !'
 'Tho' I could boast twelve virgin-daughters fair ;
 'Thine were the choice, thou noble son of fame !'
 These words scarce ended, he wide open threw
 The dark-hair'd Everallin's spacious hall. 35
 Joy beam'd ecstatic in our breasts of steel,
 And we the matchless maid of Branno bless'd.—
 Above us, on the hill, in arms appear'd
 The suite of stately Cormac, of which chief

Eight were the heroes ; with whose glitt'ring mails 40
 Effulgent flam'd the heathy plain around.
 There stood Dairo of the happy deeds,
 Victorious Frestal ; Durra of the wounds ;
 Colla and Tago ; Toscar too of might ;
 With Dala, battle's bulwark in the pass. 45
 Bright flam'd the sword in warlike Cormac's hand,
 And graceful was the hero's stately mien.
 Eight warlike heroes Ossian's party grac'd :—
 Oglan ; and Ullin, stormy son of war ;
 The noble, graceful Scélacha ; Mulla too 50
 Of gen'rous deeds, and Cerdal hot with rage ;
 Likewise Dumárican's sable brows of death.
 And why, in rank, should Ogar stand the last ;
 So wide renown'd on rocky Ardven's hills ?

Right face to face, upon the field of war, 55
 Dala the strong met Ogar. Like the wind
 On ocean's foamy waves, these heroes fought.
 The dagger Ogar well remembers still :
That fav'rite weapon of his num'rous choice.
 Nine times he drown'd it in stout Dala's side ! 60
 ('Twas then the stormy battle took a turn)
 Three times I pierced Cormac's sounding shield,
 And thrice he broke his missy, glitt'ring spear.
 But, hapless youth of love ! away his head
 I cut : and five times shook it by the lock. 65
 Then, Cormac's friends their safety sought by flight.

When striving thus in battle, lovely maid,
 Whoever would have told me, that forlorn,
 Forgot and blind, I now should pass the night :
 Firm ought his mail, in battle, to have been ; 70
 And matchless also his undaunted hand.

On Lena's heath now ceas'd the voice of song;
 Hard blew th' inconstant blast; and the high oak
 Around me shook its leaves: whilst still my thoughts
 On Everallin ran; when bright array'd
 In all the light of beauty, and in tears
 Her blue eyes rolling, she upon a cloud
 Stood in my sight, and spoke with feeble voice:

75

‘ Rise, Ossian;—save my son, the chief of men.
 ‘ Near the red oak of Lubar's sounding streams
 ‘ With Lochlin's stormy sons my Oscar fights.’
 This said, into her cloud she sunk again.

80

Clad in my steel (my steps the spear sustain'd)
 My rattling armour rung. And, as I went,
 The songs of heroes old renown'd in song
 As I was wont in danger, o'er I humm'd.
 The sound, like distant thunder, Lochlin heard,
 And trembling fled:—my Oscar them pursu'd.

65

With voice like distant streams, him I recall'd:
 ‘ My son,’ said I, ‘ o'er Lena straight return.
 ‘ Pursue the foe no further in his flight
 ‘ Though Ossian is behind thee.’—Then he came,
 And charming was the sound of Oscar's steel.

90

‘ Till death in one great mass had cover'd all,
 ‘ Why didst thou stop my conquering hand?’ he said: 95
 ‘ For, dark and dreadful, near the stream, the foe
 ‘ (Watchful against the dangers of the night)
 ‘ Thy son and Fillan met. Some to our swords
 ‘ Have victims fall'n. But, as the nightly winds
 ‘ On Mora's chrystral sands the ocean pour;
 ‘ So dark, o'er Lena's rustling heath, advance
 ‘ The sons of Lochlin. ‘Far the ghosts of night

100

‘ Shrick howling, and death’s meteors have I seen,
 ‘ The king of Morven, who in danger smiles,
 ‘ Permit me to awake. For he is like
 ‘ The sun of heaven that rises in the storm.’

105

Fingál had started from a dream of night,
 And lean’d majestic on great Tremor’s shield—
 The dark-brown shield by his forefathers worn,
 In ancient battles of their stormy race.

110

Our hero in his slumbers had beheld
 The mournful Agendecca’s shady form,—
 She from the eddying, roaring ocean came,
 And over Lena slowly, lonely mov’d.
 Pale, as the mist of Cromla, was her face ;
 And dark appear’d the tears upon her cheek.
 She from her robe oft’ rais’d her lurid hand :
 Her robe, which was of desert-clouds compos’d :
 Her lurid hand she rais’d above Fingal,
 And then her silent eyes away she turn’d.

115

120

‘ Why weeps fair Starno’s daughter,’ said Fingal,
 With a deep sigh ? ‘ Why is thy face so pale,
 ‘ Thou airy daughter of the shadowy clouds ?’

Aloft on Lena’s wind she wing’d her way,
 And left him in the dusky shades of night.
 The chiefs, which by Fingal e’er long must fall,
 Sons of her people, she distressful mourn’d.—

125

From rest the hero started and beheld,
 In form express, the phantom in his soul.
 ’Twas then the sound of Oscar’s steps drew near ;
 And on his stately side the dusky shield
 The king beheld. For, glimm’ring rays of morn
 O’er Ullin’s rolling waters faintly shone.

130

‘ Amidst their fears,’ said Morven’s rising king,
 ‘ How act the foes? Fly they through ocean’s foam? 135
 ‘ Or, do they wait the battle of the steel?
 ‘ But, why inquires Fingál? I hear their voice
 ‘ Borne on the early wind. O Oscar, fly
 ‘ O’er Lena’s heath, and wake our friends to fight.’
 Then, by the stone of Lubár stood the king, 140
 And raised thrice his loud, terrific voice.
 From Cromla’s fountains started forth the deer,
 And all the rocks shook on their sev’ral hills.—
 As down the mountains sound a hundred streams,
 That burst, and roar, and foam; and, as the clouds 145
 Before a tempest, o’er the azure sky
 Together crowd, and gen’ral blackness spread:
 So, at Fingál’s loud, roaring, thund’ring voice,
 In closest ranks the sons of Morven meet.
 For, to the warriors of his native land 150
 Delightful was the voice of Morven’s king.
 With him in battle they had often been,
 And oft’ return’d, enrich’d with spoils of war.

‘ Haste, sons of storm, to battle;’ said the king:
 ‘ Come to the death of thousands. Comhal’s son 155
 ‘ Will stand spectator on the direful strife.
 ‘ Upon that hill my flaming sword shall wave,
 ‘ And from impending harm my people shield.
 ‘ But, warriors, may you never need my aid,
 ‘ Whilst Morni’s son, the chief of warriors, fights! 160
 ‘ That his great fame may rise in future song,
 ‘ He shall conduct my battle. O, ye ghosts
 ‘ Of heroes dead! ye, that on Cromla’s storm
 ‘ Triumphant ride! my people, that may fall,
 ‘ Joyful receive, and bring them to your hills. 165
 ‘ And may they o’er my seas on Lena’s blast
 ‘ Be brought; and, present at my silent dreams,
 ‘ In sweet repose yield pleasure to my soul.

‘ Fillan, and Oscar of the dark brown hair ;
 ‘ Fair Ryno, also, with the pointed spear ; 170
 ‘ Advance with dauntless valour to the fight,
 ‘ And there upon the son of Morni look.
 ‘ Let your bright swords resemble his in strife,
 ‘ And view attent th’ achievements of his hands.
 ‘ Your father’s friends with vigilance protect, 175
 ‘ And ever bear in mind the chiefs of old.
 ‘ Tho’ here, my sons, in Erin ye should fall,
 ‘ Hereafter shall I see you. For, on high
 ‘ Soon shall we (cold, pale ghosts) together meet,
 ‘ And cloud-borne o’er the hills of Cona fly.’ 180

As flying westward from the morning beam,
 Appears a sable cloud full charg’d with storm,
 And with heav’n’s lightning edged round entire ;
 The king of hills remov’d. A brace of spears
 He held ; and from his armour terror shone. 185
 His hoary hair falls loosely on the wind,
 Whilst often back he turns, and views the war.
 His orders to the heroes to convey,
 Three bards attend upon the son of fame.
 On Cromla’s side exaltd high he sat, 190
 Waving the light’ning of his beaming sword ;
 And, as he wav’d, pursuantly we mov’d.

Joy rose in Oscar’s face : his cheek is red :
 His eye sheds tears ; and in his hand the sword
 Beam’d forth like sparkling rays of fire intense. 195
 He came—and, smiling, thus to Ossian spoke :
 ‘ O thou, the ruler of the fight of steel !
 ‘ My father, hear thy son. With Morven’s chief
 ‘ Now back retire, and give me Ossian’s fame.
 ‘ And if, my king, I fall ; that breast of snow, 200
 ‘ That lonely sunbeam of my ardent love,

• Toscar's white-handed daughter, on thy mind
• Bear, and regard. For, standing on the cliff,
• With rosy cheek, and bending o'er the stream,
• About her bosom flies her silken hair ; 205
• As she for Oscar pours the heaving sigh.
• Tell her, that fleetly, on my native hills,
• A lightly bounding son of wind I fly ;
• That I, enveil'd within an azure cloud
• Hereafter Toscar's lovely maid may meet.' 210

‘ Raise, Oscar ; rather raise my tomb,’ I said,
‘ Than I should yield the arduous fight to thee.
‘ For, first and bloodiest in the war my arm
‘ Shall teach thee how to wield the glitt’ring steel.
‘ But, son, within the dark and narrow house,
‘ Whose mark is one grey stone, attentive be
‘ This sword, this bow, and horn of deer to place.
‘ My dearest Oscar, I possess no love,
‘ To leave to my son’s care : for, now no more
‘ Is graceful Everallin, Branno’s fair !—

Such were our words, when growing on the wind
Came Gaul's loud, roaring voice. His father's sword
He way'd on high, and rush'd to death and wounds.

As o'er the boist'rous main impetuous come
The waves, white-bubbling, swelling, roaring on : 225
As rocks of oose resist the roaring waves :
So foes attack'd and fought. Man met with man :
And steel with steel. Shields sound and warriors fall.
As move a hundred hammers of the forge
On metal red ; so rose, so rung their swords. 230

With roaring strength, like Ardven's whirlwind blast,
Gaul onward rush'd. Destruction on his sword

For heroes wait. And like the desert fire
 On Gormal's echoing heath, red Swaran rag'd.
 The death of many spears, in direful strife, 235
 How can I give to song? High rose my sword,
 And dreadful flam'd amidst the strife of blood!
 And dreadful, Oscar, was thy mighty arm,
 My best, my greatest son! My secret soul
 With rapture heav'd, whilst flaming o'er the slain 240
 His sword I saw. Amain thro' Lena's heath
 They fled in crowds, and we pursu'd, and slew.
 As bound from rock to rock impinging stones;
 As falling axes sound in echoing woods:
 As turbid storms of roaring thunder roll 245
 From hill to hill in dismal, broken peals:
 So blow to blow, and death to death succeeds,
 From the joint force of Oscar's hand, and mine.

But strong as rolls the tide of Inistore
 Round Morni's son clos'd Swaran. At the sight 250
 The king half-rose, and half-assum'd his spear.—

‘ Go, Ullin, go, my aged bard,’ he said:
 ‘ The mighty Gaul of battle now remind:
 ‘ Remind him of his great forefathers’ fame.
 ‘ With martial song support the yielding fight, 255
 ‘ For song to war recruitive vigour gives.’

With steps of age then stately Ullin went,
 And thus the mighty king of spears address'd:
 ‘ Descendant of the chief of gen’rous steeds!
 ‘ High-bounding king of spears! Thou potent arm 260
 ‘ In ev’ry dang’rous toil. Thou heart of stone,
 ‘ That never yields. Of death’s keen arms thou chief,
 ‘ Cut down the foe; and round dark Inistore
 ‘ Let no white sail hereafter proudly bound.

‘ Like thunder be thy arm : thy eyes like fire :	265
‘ Thy heart of solid rock : whirl round thy sword,	
‘ As flames the nightly meteor ; and thy shield	
‘ Lift up coruscant, as the flame of death.	
‘ Descendant from the chief of gen’rous steeds	
‘ In might rush on—cut down the foe—destroy.’	270

High beat the hero’s heart. But Swaran came
With battle ; and the shield of mighty Gaul
Sever’d in twain.—The sons of desert fled.

Now in his might Fingál arose, and thrice	
His voice he rais’d ; and Cromla answer’d ’round :	275
Then still the stormy sons of desert stood.—	
Ashamed at the presence of Fingál,	
They down to earth their blushing faces bent.	
As rolls a cloud of rain slow o’er the hill,	
When scorching sunbeams parch the thirsty glebe,	280
And fields expect the falling show’r, he came.	
When Swaran saw th’ approach of Morven’s king,	
He stop’d amidst his course. And on his spear,	
Around his red eyes rolling, dark he lean’d.	
Silent and tall he stood.—So stands an oak	285
On Lubar’s banks, whose branches were of old	
By heav’n’s artillery blasted. O’er the stream	
It bends : and, when assaulted by the gale	
It’s grey moss whistles :—such appear’d the king :—	
To Lena’s rising heath he slow retir’d.	290
His thousands then around the hero pour,	
And martial darkness gathers on the hill.	

Fingál, in semblance like a beam from heav’n,	
Encircled by his num’rous people, shone.	
’Round him his heroes gather, and his voice	295
Sounds forth with pow’r : ‘ My standards raise on high.	

- As flame an hundred hills, on Lena's wind
- Them spread, and let their sound on Erin's blasts
- Remind us of the fight. Ye valiant sons
- Of roaring streams, that from a thousand hills
- Forth issuing pour, be near to Moryen's king,
- And listen careful to his words of pow'r.
- Gaul, strongest arm of death ! O Oscar, who
- In future fight shall shine ! And Connal too,
- Of the blue steel of Sora faithful son !
- Dermid of dark-brown hair ! Of many songs
- O Ossian, king ! be near your father's arm.'

In haste we battle's sunbeam rear'd erect,
The standard of the king! Each hero's soul
Rejoic'd as on the wind it waving flew!
It's vast expanse, beset with studs of gold,
Shone like the concave of the nightly sky.
Each hero too within the warlike train
His standard had, and each his gloomy men.

‘ Behold !’ begun the king of gen’rous shells, 315
‘ On Lena’s heath, how Lochlin’s sons divide !
‘ Like broken clouds upon the hill they stand ;
‘ Or, like an half-consumed grove of oaks,
‘ When thro’ its branches we perceive the sky,
‘ And glitt’ring, gliding meteors pass behind.
‘ Let every chief amongst Fingál’s brave friends
‘ Take a dark troop of those that frown so high,
‘ Nor let upon the waves of Inistore
‘ A son of echoing groves hereafter bound.’
‘ Let the seven chiefs, that came from Lena’s heath, 325
‘ Be mine’, said Gaul, ‘ to meet my arm of strength.’

Said Oscar; ' To the sword of Ossian's son
' Let Inistore's dark king himself approach.'

‘ Let Iniscon’s great king, that heart of steel,
 ‘ To mine now come,’ the valiant Connal said !

330

‘ On clay-cold earth, or Mudan’s chief, or I,’
 Said brown-hair’d Dermid, ‘ finally shall sleep.’

Tho’ now so weak and dark ; yet then my choice
 Was Torman’s battling king ; his dark-brown shield
 I promised, with mine hand to bear away.

335

Fingál of mildest look then thus reply’d :
 ‘ Victorious be my valiant chiefs, and bless’d !
 ‘ My choice is Swaran, king of roaring waves.’

As when thro’ many vales, a hundred winds
 With all their strength in diff’rent currents roar ;
 In dark and sep’rate columns so advanc’d
 The sons of hills, and Cromla echo’d round.

When in the strife of sounding steel we clos’d,
 The dreadful carnage how can I relate ?
 O Toscar’s daughter ! bloody were our hands !

345

Like banks down broken by loud Cona’s flood,
 The thick and gloomy ranks of Lochlin fell ;
 And vict’ry crown’d our arms on Lena’s heath,
 Each chief fulfill’d his promise. Oft’, O maid,
 Beside the streams of Branno didst thou sit,

350

When rose thy snowy breast, with frequent sighs,
 As swells the swan, when slow she sails the lake,
 And sidelong winds her downy feathers blow.—
 Thou, Toscar’s daughter, hast beheld the sun
 Retiring red and slow behind his cloud :

355

Night on the mountain closing, whilst the blast
 In narrow, winding vales unfrequent roar’d.
 At length the rain beats hard, and pealing rolls

Hoarse thunder. Light'ning glances on the rock.
 Ghosts ride on beams of fire, and down the hills 360
 The strength of mountain-streams in torrents roar.—
 Such was the din of battle, white-arm'd maid!—
 Why, daughter of the hill, that falling tear?
 For, Lochlin's maids alone have cause to weep.
 The people of their country fell: and red 365
 Was the blue steel of my heroic race.
 But now I sad, forlorn, and blind remain!
 With heroes now no longer I consort!
 Give, lovely maid, to me thy chrystral tears;
 For I the tombs of all my friends have seen. 370
 'Twas then a hero by Fingál's own hand
 Fell, to his grief. Grey hair'd he roll'd in dust,
 And lifted tow'rds the king his fading eyes.
 ' And is it then by me,' said Comhal's son,
 ' That Agendecca's friend expiring lies! 375
 ' For my lov'd maid, in bloody Starno's hall,
 ' I saw thy tears; thou, of her foes the foe.
 ' The grave of Mathon's son raise, Ullin, raise;
 ' And give his name to Agandecca's song.
 ' For dear, O' Ardven's darkly-dwelling maid— 380
 ' Dear to my soul hast thou, O virgin, been!

From Cromla's cave Cuchullin heard the noise
 Of troubled war. Then, Connal, chief of swords,
 And Carril of other times he call'd direct.
 Arm'd with their aspen spears, the grey-hair'd chiefs 385
 Attended, and the tide of battle saw,
 Like ocean's crowded waves, when from the deep
 The gusty, swelling winds tempestuous blow
 And roll the billows through the sandy vale.

Cuchullin kindled at the stormy sight, 390
 And darkness gather'd on his martial brow.
 His hand is on his ancestral sword:

And on the foe red roll his flaming eyes.
 Thrice he attempted to the fight to rush :
 And thrice did Connal stop the rash career.

395

‘ Chief of the misty isle,’ he said, ‘ Fingal
 Subdues the foe. Then, seek not thou to share
 The royal fame :—himself is like a storm.’

‘ Then, Carril go,’ reply’d the warlike chief ;
 ‘ And greet the valiant king of Morven’s hills.

400

‘ When Lochlin dwindle (like the falling stream,
 When rains are ceased) to its lowest ebb :

‘ And when the noise of battle is no more :—

‘ Then sound melodious in the royal ear
 Thy voice in praise of Morven’s king of swords.

405

‘ To him surrender Caithbat’s sword, now due.
 ‘ For now to bear his fam’d ancestor’s arms,

‘ Cuchullin is no longer worthy found.

‘ But, O ye ghosts of Cromla’s lonely heights,
 Ye souls of mighty chiefs, that are no more !

410

‘ Associate with Cuchullin in the cave
 Of his lorn grief, and with his soul converse.

‘ For, like a once-bright beam, that shines no more :—
 Like mist dispersed by the morning blast,

‘ Which streaks with light the shaggy mountain’s side : 415
 So now again, among the mighty chiefs,

‘ That aggrandize the land ; I shall not shine.
 Of wars and arms, O Connal, talk no more :

‘ Gone is my fame. On Cromla’s wind my sighs
 Shall tremble ; and my footsteps cease to be.

420

‘ And thou, Bragéla, with the snow-white breast,
 Lament the final flight of my renown :

‘ For, lovely sunbeam of Dun-scaich, henceforth
 Vanquish’d, I’ll never more to thee return.’

Fingal :

AN ANCIENT EPIC POEM.

ARGUMENT.

CUCHULLIN and Connal still remain on the hill. Fingal and Swaran meet; the combat is described. Swaran is overcome, and delivered over as a prisoner to the care of Ossian, and Gaul (the son of Morni.) Fingal, his younger sons, and Oscar, still pursue the enemy. The episode of Orla, a chief of Lochlin, who was mortally wounded in the battle, is introduced. Fingal, touched with the death of Orla, orders the pursuit to be discontinued; and, calling his sons together, he is informed that Ryno, the youngest of them, was killed. He laments his death, hears the story of Lamderg and Gelchossa, and returns towards the place where he had left Swaran. Caroil, who had been sent by Cuchullin to congratulate Fingal upon his victory, comes in the mean time to Ossian. The conversation of the two poets closes the action of the fourth day.

BOOK V.

NOW, to the chieftain of the noble car

On Cromla's windy side thus Connal spoke :

- ‘ Why, son of Semo, why that sable gloom ?
- ‘ Our friends are mighty on th’ embattled plain.
- ‘ And also, warrior, great renown is thine ;
- ‘ For many were the deaths of thy red steel.
- ‘ Oft’ has Bragéla, with blue rolling eyes
- ‘ Of joy, her hero with his valiant train—
- ‘ Oft’ has she met him when his reeking sword
- ‘ Was red with slaughter, and within the field
- ‘ Of the lone tomb in silence lay his foes.

5

10

‘ Whilst in the song thy valiant actions rung,
‘ Thy bards were pleasant to her list’ning ear.

‘ But, see the valiant king of Morven’s hills !
‘ He, like a fiery pillar, moves below. 15
‘ Like Lubar’s stream ; or echoing Cromla’s wind,
‘ When branchy groves uprooted fall by night,
‘ Firm he abides, and peerless in his strength.

‘ Fingál, blest are thy people ! for, thy arm
‘ Shall fight their battles ! Thou, the first in war, 20
‘ Matur’st their counsels in the time of peace.
‘ Thousands obedient wait thy sage commands,
‘ And armies tremble at thy sounding steel.
‘ Happy, Fingál, must thy glad people be !
‘ Thou matchless chief of Morven’s woody hills ! 25

‘ But who, in all yon gloomy terror clad,
‘ Advances thund’ring? Who, but Starno’s son?
‘ The king of Morven’s strength resolv’d to try!

‘ Behold the dreadful battle of the chiefs !
‘ So, when far distant two fierce spirits meet, 30
‘ The rolling of the billow to contest,
‘ The stormy ocean roars : and, on his hill,
‘ The hunter hears the noise, and trembling sees
‘ To Ardyn’s shore the turbid billows roll.—

Whilst Connal was thus speaking ;—on the plain, 35
Where crowds were falling, the two heroes met.
There was the clang of arms ! *There* ev'ry blow
Was like the hundred hammers of the forge !
Dreadful appears the battle of the kings,
And horridly they roll their livid eyes ! 40
In twain their dark-brown, bossy shields are cleft,

And from their helmets flies the broken steel.
 Down to the ground in haste their weapons flung,
 Each springing forth to grasp his deathful foe,
 They round each other bend their sinewy arms. 45
 From side to side they turn, and strain, and stretch
 Their large and vastly spreading limbs below.
 But when their strength in all its pride arose,
 The hills beneath their heels in tremors shook ;
 From airy heights the rending rocks descend ; 50
 And green-top'd bushes from their roots are torn.
 At length the struggling strength of Swaran fell ;
 And bound appears the captive king of groves.

Thus have I seen on Cona (but no more
 Behold I Cona)—by strong, bursting streams, 55
 Thus have I seen two hills, with all their swarth,
 Uprooted and removed from their place.
 From side to side they reel, and in the air
 Their stately, sturdy oaks each other meet.
 With all their rocks and trees, they, in one mass, 60
 Then fall together ; whilst the varied streams
 Around their alter'd sides new channels seek :
 And the red ruin is beheld afar.

‘ Ye sons of Morven’s king,’ said great Fingál,
 ‘ The warlike king of Lochlin safely guard ; 65
 ‘ For, as his thousand waves in strength is he !
 ‘ His hand is well instructed in the fight,
 ‘ And he of ancient regal race is sprung.
 ‘ Gaul, my chief hero,—Ossian, king of songs ;
 ‘ To Agandecca’s friend attention pay, 70
 ‘ And raise his gloomy grief to mildest joy.
 ‘ Swift Oscar, Fillan, Ryno, in the race,
 ‘ Lochlin’s remaining sons o’er Lena’s heath,
 ‘ Swift as the wings of wind in haste pursue :

‘ That on green Inistore’s dark-rolling waves 75
 ‘ No white sail’d vessel may hereafter bound.’

They o'er the heath swift as the light'ning flew,
But, still as o'er the estive sultry plain
A cloud of thunder rolls, he slowly mov'd.
Dreadful as streams the meteor of the night,
His glitt'ring sword he, like a sunbeam held.
Then tow'rds a chief of Lochlin bent his course,
And thus the son of snow-white waves address'd :

‘ Who there approaches, like a sable cloud,
 ‘ Near to the rock, where roaring waters stream ? 85
 ‘ Here he must stop, for o'er their raging course
 ‘ He cannot bound ; yet stately is the chief.
 ‘ Upon his side his bossy shield he bears
 ‘ And his huge spear is like the desert-tree.
 ‘ Youth of the dark-brown hair, speak out and say,
 ‘ Dost thou approach Fingál, as Erin's foe ?’ 90

‘ I am a son of Lochlin,’ loud he cries,
‘ And strong for war is my restless arm.
‘ At home my wife in tears my absence mourns,
‘ But Orla never will again return.’

‘ Or fights, or yields, the hero?’ said Fingál,
The king and hero of the noble deeds.
‘ Foes in my presence can’t with honour stand :
‘ But in the hall my friends obtain renown.
‘ Son of the wave, me follow ; and partake 100
‘ The feast of shells, and on my desert hills
‘ Pursue the deer, and be Fingál’s ally.’
‘ No :’ said the hero, ‘ I the feeble help.
‘ To aid the weak in arms, my strength I’ll give.
‘ Unmatched, hitherto, has been my sword, 105
‘ O warrior. Let the king of Morven yield.’

‘ Orla, to yield I never yet was known.
 ‘ No:—never did Fingál submit to man.
 ‘ Draw then thy sword, and pitch upon thy foe;
 ‘ For many are my heroes for thy choice.’

110

‘ And does the king refuse with me to fight?’
 Then Orla of the dark-brown hair reply’d.

‘ Fingál with Orla can in fight compeer,
 ‘ And he alone of all his num’rous race.—
 ‘ But, king of Morven, if I here should fall,
 ‘ (For, *soon or late the warrior needs must die;*)
 ‘ In magnitude exceeding all the rest,
 ‘ My silent tomb in Lena central raise:
 ‘ And to the spouse of his once warmest love
 ‘ Send o’er the dark-blue ocean Orla’s sword:
 ‘ That to her son if she, with tears, may shew,
 ‘ And kindle up his soul for feats of war.’

115

120

Fingál reply’d: ‘ Son of the mournful tale,
 ‘ Why harrow up my soul with tearful grief?
 ‘ *Warriors one day must die*, and in the hall
 ‘ Their children on their useless arms may look.
 ‘ But, Orla, rest assur’d thy tomb shall rise,
 ‘ And o’er thy sword thy mournful spouse shall weep.’

125

On Lena’s heath they fought, but feeble soon
 Prov’d Orla’s arm. Fingál’s broad, waving sword,
 With force descending, cleft his shield in twain,
 And glitt’ring on the ground the pieces lay.
 So beam’d the moon upon the stream of night.

130

‘ O king of Morven,’ then the hero said,
 ‘ Lift up thy sword; and pierce this panting breast.
 ‘ Wounded and faint from battle, here I stand
 ‘ Deserted by my friends. The mournful tale,

135

‘ On streamy Loda’s banks, shall reach my love,
 ‘ Whilst lonely in the silent woods she sits,
 ‘ And in the leaves the rustling breezes blow !’ 140

‘ No’—then reply’d the king of Morven’s hills ;
 ‘ No, Orla, thee Fingál will never wound.
 ‘ Thee, safe escaped from the hands of war,
 ‘ On Loda’s banks let her once more behold.
 ‘ Let thy grey-headed father, who with age 145
 ‘ Perhaps is blind within the spacious hall,
 ‘ And for thee waiting ; listen to thy voice.
 ‘ With gladness let the aged hero rise,
 ‘ And for his ^{son} grope with his hands of age.’

‘ But he, Fingál, his son will never find,’ 150
 The youth of streamy Loda then reply’d ;
 ‘ For, Lena’s heath shall be my last abode,
 ‘ And foreign bards my name shall give to song.
 ‘ My deadly wound my spreading girdle hides,
 ‘ Which now I freely render to the wind.’ 155

Black from his side then pour’d the flowing gore,
 And pale and speechless on the ground he fell.
 Then over him expiring bends Fingál,
 And to his younger heroes gives command :—

‘ Oscar and Fillan, my beloved sons, 160
 ‘ High raise the monument of Orla’s fame.
 ‘ In lasting sleep, far from his once-lov’d spouse,
 ‘ Here let the dark-hair’d hero ever rest.
 ‘ Far from the sound of Loda’s roaring streams
 ‘ Within the narrow house let him remain. 165
 ‘ The sons of weakness, at his distant home,
 ‘ Shall find his bow, unable it to bend.
 ‘ Upon his hills his faithful dogs do howl,

- ‘ And greatly his once hunted boars rejoice.
- ‘ Fall’n is the arm of battle, and the man
- ‘ Amongst the valiant noted, low is laid !

170

- ‘ Exalt the voice, ye sons of Morven’s king,
- ‘ And wind the horn ; and let us straight return
- ‘ To Swaran, and in song dismiss the night.
- ‘ Swift Fillan, Oscar, Ryno in the race,
- ‘ Like light’ning, o’er the heath of Lena fly—
- ‘ But where art thou, O Ryno, son of fame ?
- ‘ Thou art not wont to greet thy father last.—

175

- ‘ Ryno,’ said Ullin, first of skilful bards,
- ‘ With his forefathers’ awful forms now sleeps.
- ‘ With once-renowned Trathal, king of shields ;
- ‘ And Trenmor, once-fain’d chief of mighty deeds ;
- ‘ Low lies the youth on Lena’s shady heath.
- ‘ That face is pale, which once with fervor glow’d !’

180

- ‘ And fell the swiftest in the sounding chase—
- ‘ The first to bend the bow !’ reply’d the king.
- ‘ To me thy person scarcely has been known.
- ‘ Alas, so soon why did young Ryno fall !
- ‘ Peaceful and soft on Lena be thy sleep !
- ‘ E’er long, Fingál shall thee again behold :—
- ‘ Soon shall my voice of strength be heard no more ;
- ‘ And soon my footsteps cease to meet the eye.
- ‘ Fingál’s renown the tuneful bards shall sing,
- ‘ And stones my name from age to age record.
- ‘ But low indeed, before renown in war
- ‘ Thou didst acquire, art thou, my Ryno, fall’n !
- ‘ Ullin, for Ryno strike the tuneful harp,
- ‘ And tell what fame the chief would soon have gain’d.
- ‘ Farewell, thou chief, the first in ev’ry field !
- ‘ Thy dart no more shall I direct. That face
- ‘ So fair, I now no more behold ! Farewell !’

185

190

195

200

The starting tear stands on the royal cheek :
 For terrible had been his son in war.
 His son ! in semblance like a beam of fire
 In midnight-gloom coruscant on the hill, 205
 When sinking forests fall beneath its course,
 And the lone trav'ller trembles at the sound.

Then thus began the king of gen'rous shells :
 ‘ Whose fame in that dark tomb interred lies ?
 ‘ Four stones conspicuous with their mossy heads
 ‘ There standing, mark the narrow house of death.
 ‘ Near it let my dear Ryno lie in peace,
 ‘ And neighbour to the once great heroes sleep.
 ‘ Perhaps here also rests some chief of fame,
 ‘ Consorted with my son on clouds to fly.— 210
 ‘ Back to my memory again to bring
 ‘ The sable tenants of the silent tomb,
 ‘ The songs of other times, O Ullin, raise.
 ‘ If, in the field where valiant heroes fought,
 ‘ They from approaching danger never fled : 220
 ‘ Far from his friends, on Lena’s shaggy heath,
 ‘ With them my once brave son shall ever rest.’

‘ Here rest’—then said the mouth of sweetest song :
 ‘ Here rest the chief of heroes.—In this tomb
 ‘ Still Lamderg lies ; and Ullin, king of swords ! 225
 ‘ And who, soft smiling from her azure cloud,
 ‘ Darts to my sight her matchless face of love ?
 ‘ Why, daughter, why—thou first of Cromla’s maids,
 ‘ Appear’st thou pale ? Dost thou, Gelchossa, sleep
 ‘ Promiscuous with the foes in battle, say ? 230
 ‘ Tho’ thousands made to thee their suit of love,
 ‘ Tuathal’s daughter with the breast like snow,
 ‘ Yet Lamderg reign’d the fav’rite of thy heart.
 ‘ To Selma’s mossy tow’rs the warrior came,

“ And, striking his dark buckler, spoke aloud : 235
 “ Where is Gelchossa—(she, whom I adore,)
 “ Tuathal’s beauteous fair of noble race ?
 “ With dark Ulfadda when I went to fight,
 “ In Selma’s hall I left the anxious maid.
 “ Return, O Lamderg ;—soon return,” ‘she cry’d ;’ 240
 “ For here disconsolate Gelchossa waits.
 “ With sighs profound her heaving breast arose :
 “ Her cheek was bathed with fast-flowing tears.
 “ But now, returning from the heat of fight,
 “ I see her not with hasty steps approach, 245
 “ With placid joy, to soothe my ruffled soul.
 “ Silent and still is my once joyful hall,
 “ Nor do I hear the tuneful voice of bards.
 “ With joy to welcome Lamderg now return’d,
 “ His chains Bran shakes not at the massy gate. 250
 “ Where is Gelchossa—(she, whom I adore !)
 “ Tuathal’s placid daughter, charming fair ?”

“ Lamderg !” then answers Ferchios, Aidon’s son,
 “ Attended by her maids, skill’d in the bow,
 “ In close pursuit of the fleet, bounding deer, 255
 “ Perhaps Gelchossa is to Cromla gone.—

“ Ferchios !” in haste then Cromla’s chief reply’d :
 “ By Lamderg’s list’ning ear no voice is heard.
 “ The groves of Lena give no echoing sound ;
 “ Nor, to my eyes, appear the deer to fly, 260
 “ Nor panting dog with swiftest course to run :
 “ Nor fair, as sets on Cromla’s shady hills
 “ The full orb’d moon, Gelchossa do I see.
 “ Go, Ferchios, go to Allad, hoary sage,
 “ Son of the rocks, encircled in the stones ; 265
 “ For, where Gelchossa is, he may declare.”

‘ With hasty steps the son of Aidon went,
‘ And thus to Allad’s ear himself address’d :
“ O Allad, resient in the silent rock,
“ Trembling alone, what saw thine eyes of age ?” 270

‘ Allad, the hoary sage to him reply’d :
“ I Ullin, Cairbar’s son, distinctly saw :—
“ Like a dark cloud from Cromla’s hills he came ;
“ And, like a wintry blast in leafless groves,
“ A surly song he humm’d ;” ‘ then Selma’s hall 275
‘ He ent’ring said : “ Most terrible of men,
“ Lamderg, with Ullin straightway fight, or yield.”

“ Lamderg,” ‘ reply’d Gelchossa, “ is not here :
“ But, with Ulfadda fierce, the warrior fights.
“ Thou first of men, the warrior is not here, 230
“ Yet Lamderg, son of battle, never yields :
“ And he with Cairbar’s son will surely fight.”

“ Lovely art thou ;” then dreadful Ullin said,
“ Tuathal’s daughter, chief of gen’rous soul !
“ To Cairbar’s halls direct I’ll thee convey : 285
“ For thee, Gelchossa, shall the valiant win.
“ Lamderg to meet—(that potent son of war !)
“ Three days entire on Cromla’s heath I’ll wait.
“ But, on the fourth, if mighty Lamderg fly,
“ Then fair Gelchossa shall my nuptials grace.” 290

" Peace to thy dreams ! O Allad of the cave,"
Said Cromla's chief. " But, Ferchios, sound my horn,
That Ullin may on heathy Cromla wait."

‘ From Selma, loud as roars a pow’rful stream,
‘ Ferocious Lamberg now ascends the hill : 295
‘ And forth advancing humm’d a surly song,
‘ Like falling streams which roll with thund’ring roar.

- ‘ As hangs a cloud, but to assailing winds
- ‘ Varies in shape, he stood upon the hill ;
- ‘ And, as a warlike signal, roll’d a stone. 300
- ‘ Ullin, the foe, the hero heard with joy
- ‘ At Cairbar’s hall ; and took his father’s spear.
- ‘ Whilst by his side he plac’d the polish’d sword,
- ‘ A bright’ning smile o’erspread his swarthy cheek.
- ‘ Holding a dagger bright, he whistling went. 305

‘ The hill ascending, like a wreath of mist,
 ‘ The fair Gelchossa saw the silent chief.
 ‘ In floods of silent tears for Lamderg’s fate
 ‘ Her white and heaving breast she often smote.’

- “ Cairbar, thou hoary chief of sounding shells ;” 310
- “ The maid of tender hand then loudly cry’d.”
- “ On Cromla’s hills I must exert my bow,
- “ For there the dark-brown, branchy hinds I see.”

- ‘ So saying, straightway, she ascends the hill :
- ‘ But vain the scheme !—the gloomy heroes fought ! 315
- ‘ How wrathful heroes in fierce combat meet,
- ‘ To Morven’s king ’twere vain in me to say.
- ‘ Fierce Ullin fell. Young Lamderg pallid came
- ‘ To his lov’d maid, renown’d Tuathai’s fair.’

- “ What blood, my love,” ‘ the soft-hair’d woman said,’ 320
- “ What blood runs down my noble warrior’s side ?”
- “ O thou more fair than snow on Cromla’s plains,
- “ ’Tis Ullin’s blood !” ‘ the valiant chief reply’d.’
- “ A little here, Gelchossa, let me rest ;”—
- ‘ But soon the mighty Lamderg breathless lay ! 325

“ And sleepest thou, O shady Cromla’s chief,
 “ On earth so soon ?” reply’d the white arm’d maid.

‘ Three days entire, beside her love, she mourn’d ;
 ‘ And then a corpse was by the hunters found.
 ‘ This spacious tomb they rais’d above the three : 330
 ‘ And, here intombed with the chiefs of fame,
 ‘ Thy son, O Morven’s king, may ever rest.’

‘ And here my son *shall* rest,’ reply’d Fingál,
 ‘ Amongst the chiefs, whose fame has reach’d my ears.
 ‘ And Orla too, pale youth of Loda’s streams, 335
 ‘ Fillan and Fergus, also hither bring.
 ‘ Nor shall my Ryno then unequall’d lie
 ‘ When Orla sleeps entombed by his side.
 ‘ Weep, Morven’s daughter, and, of Loda’s streams
 ‘ Ye beauteous maids ! For they, upon the hills, 340
 ‘ Grew like a tree ; and, like the desert-oak,
 ‘ Have fall’n together ; when across the stream
 ‘ It lies, and withers in the mountain-wind.

‘ How they have fall’n, O Oscar, first of youths,
 ‘ Thou witnessest. Like them, seek fame on earth ; 345
 ‘ And thee, like them, the tuneful bards shall sing.
 ‘ Dreadful in battle were their warlike forms ;
 ‘ But calm was Ryno in the days of peace.
 ‘ So shines the distant rainbow on the stream,
 ‘ When Mora’s heights obscure the setting sun ; 350
 ‘ And on the hills of deer still silence reigns.
 ‘ Rest, youngest of my sons ;—O Ryno, rest
 ‘ On Lena’s plains. We too shall be no more.
 ‘ For, *one day must the strongest warrior fall.*’

Such was thy grief, thou king of Morven’s hills, 355
 When speechless on the earth thy Ryno lay :—
 What therefore must the grief of Ossian be,
 Since thou thyself art now for ever gone !
 No more thy distant voice on Cona sounds ;

Nor could my eyes, tho' clear, again thee see. 360
 Forlorn, and dark at thy cold, silent tomb
 I often sit, and grope it with my hands.
 Sometimes thy thund'ring voice, methinks, I hear ;
 But soon it proves the dreary desert-blast.
 Long since Fingál, the ruler of the war, 365
 His steel put off, and slept in final rest.

On the green, matted banks of Lubar's streams
 Brave Gaul and Ossian with dark Swaran sat.
 To please the king I touch'd the warbling lyre ;
 But still a gloom sat brooding on his brow, 370
 And his red cheeks tow'rds Lena's heath he roll'd.
 His people fall'n, the hero sadly mourn'd !

To Cromla's hills my eyes I lifted up,
 And gen'rous Semo's son distinctly saw.
 Tow'rds Tura's lonely cave he sad and slow, 375
 From off his hill, retir'd. Fingál he saw
 Victorious, and his grief was streak'd with joy.
 His radiant armour glitter'd in the sun.
 Whilst Connal moved next, sedate and slow,
 Behind the hill—as, when by winds pursu'd, 380
 Two glowing pillars of the fire of night,
 Brushing with sound along the shady heath,
 Behind th' horizon vanish :—so they sunk.
 Beside a rapid stream of roaring foam,
 A rock contains this lonely cave o'erhung 385
 By one lone bending tree. Against its sides
 Reverberant rush the winds.—Here lies retir'd
 Dunscaich's chief warrior, gen'rous Semo's son.
 Whilst down his cheeks roll briny tears, his thoughts
 Still on his adverse battle sadly run. 390
 His now departed fame, that wing'd its way,
 Like Cona's mist, distressfully he mourns.

Too far remote to sooth this hero's grief,
 Art thou Bragéla! Yet within his soul
 Shed thy bright form, that his wild, scatter'd thoughts 395
 To Dunscaich's lonely sunbeam may return.

But, who approaches, with the locks of age?—
 'Tis Carril of other times! Hail, son of song!
 Melodious as the harp in Tura's halls
 Sounds thy sweet voice. Thy honeyed, flowing words 400
 Descend, like show'rs upon the sultry glebe.
 Carril of times of old, why thus approach?
 Why thus remove from gen'rous Semo's son?

‘ O Ossian, king of swords,’ reply’d the bard,
 ‘ The tuneful voice of song thou best canst raise. 405
 ‘ To Carril long, O ruler of the fight,
 ‘ Hast thou been known. Oft’ have I swept the lyre
 ‘ To lovely Everállin, charming fair!
 ‘ In gen’rous Branno’s hall of sounding shells
 ‘ My voice oft’ hast thou in sweet concert join’d. 410
 ‘ And often Everállin’s mildest notes,
 ‘ Amidst our voices, were with transport heard.
 ‘ Of Cormac’s fall (the youth who for her died)
 ‘ In sweetest strains, one day, she softly sung.
 ‘ The pearly tears upon her cheek I saw: 415
 ‘ Nor couldst thou, the chief of men, but weep.
 ‘ Tho’ him she lov’d not, still her secret soul
 ‘ Was touch’d with pity for the hapless youth.
 ‘ How fair, amongst a thousand beauteous maids,
 ‘ Unrivall’d reign’d the gen’rous Branno’s fair! 420

‘ Bring not, O Carril:—I to him reply’d:
 ‘ Bring not her mem’ry to my sinking mind.
 ‘ If I upon her think—my soul must melt,
 ‘ And tears indulgent ease my brimful eyes!

- A pallid corpse in clay-cold earth now sleeps 425
- That once so softly-blushing fair of love !
- But place thyself upon the shady heath,
- And let us hear, O bard, thy tuneful voice.
- Not more delightful is the gale of spring,
- That meets with trembling sighs the hunter's ear, 430
- When on the hill, amidst his sweet repose,
- He hears, or thinks he hears, celestial airs
- By spirits sung ; and with the music wakes
- In ecstacies, enraptur'd by the sound.'

END OF BOOK FIFTH.

Fingal :

AN ANCIENT EPIC POEM.

ARGUMENT.

NIGHT comes on. Fingal gives a feast to his army, at which Swaran is present. The king commands Ullin, his bard, to give the song of peace; a custom always observed at the end of a war. Ullin relates the actions of Trennior, great grandfather to Fingal, in Scandinavia, and his marriage with Inibaca, the daughter of a king of Lochlin, who was ancestor to Swaran; which consideration, together with his being brother to Agandecca, with whom Fingal was in love in his youth, induced the king to release him, and permit him to return, with the remnant of his army into Lochlin, upon his promise of never returning to Ireland in a hostile manner. The night is spent in settling Swaran's departure, in songs of bards; and in a conversation, in which the story of Grunial is introduced by Fingal. Morning comes. Swaran departs. Fingal goes on a hunting party, and finding Cuchullin in the cave of Tura, comforts him, and sets sail the next day, for Scotland; which concludes the poem.

BOOK VI.

THE sable clouds of night come rolling down
And on the dark-brown steep of Cromla rest.
The northern stars o'er Ullin's rolling waves
Emit their heads of fire through fleeting mist.
A distant wind roars in the shady wood,
But dark and silent is the plain of death.

5

Yet, on the dark'ning Lena, in my ears
The tuneful voice of Carril still arose.
Of the companions of our youthful days
And times now past; when we, on Lego's banks
Assembling, held the joys of shiells, he sung;

10

Whilst Cromla's cloudy steeps loud echo gave.
 Forth in the rustling blasts the ghosts of those,
 In praise of whom he sung, came ; and were seen
 Attentive to the strains to bend with joy.

15

Blest be thy soul amidst thy eddying winds,
 O Carril ! and, when lonely in the night
 Within my hall I rest, O may'st thou come !
 And come thou *dost*, my friend ; for of my lyre,
 When on the distant wall it hangs, I hear
 Thy airy fingers often sweep the strings ;
 And grateful meets my ear the feeble sound.
 To me, o'erwhelm'd with grief, then why not speak ?
 Why not declare when I my friends shall see ?
 But thou departest in thy murmur'ring blast,
 Which whistles loud in Ossian's hoary hair.

20

25

Now on the side of Mora to the feast
 The martial heroes gather.—In the wind
 A thousand aged oaks with raging heat
 Together burn. The strength of shells goes round :
 The souls of warriors brighten with the joy :
 But Lochlin's king in sullen silence sits,
 And sorrow reddens in his haughty eyes.
 Tow'rd Lena's heath his face he often turn'd,
 And still reflected on his late defeat.

30

35

Fingál upon his ancestral shield
 Reclin'd ; whilst slowly wav'd upon the wind
 His hoary locks, which, to the beam of night
 Reflecting, glitter'd. Then on Swaran's grief
 He look'd, and thus to Ullin, first of bards—

40

‘ Raise, Ullin, raise the song of peace,’ he said,
 ‘ And, after battle, sooth my ruffled soul,

‘ By driving from my ear the din of arms :
 ‘ And also, that the heart of Lochlin’s king
 ‘ May brighten, let a hundred harps be near : 45
 ‘ For, but with joy must he from us depart :—
 ‘ *None* ever from Fingál departed sad.
 ‘ Against the stubborn warrior does my sword
 ‘ Like lightning, O:car, blaze ; but near my side
 ‘ When foes submissive yield, it peaceful lies.’ 50

Then thus began the mouth of sweetest song :

‘ In days of other years great Trenmor liv’d :—
 ‘ Companion of the storm, o’er northern waves
 ‘ He dauntless bounded : and thro’ shady mist
 ‘ The cliff’s of Lochlin’s land and murmur’ring groves 55
 ‘ Straight to the valiant hero plain appear’d :
 ‘ And his white-bosom’d sails in haste he bound.

‘ The dreadful boar, that roar’d in Gormal’s woods,
 ‘ From whose tremendous roarings thousands fled,
 ‘ Trenmor pursu’d ; and by his spear it fell. 60

‘ Three chiefs, spectators of the matchless deed,
 ‘ The mighty stranger’s fame around proclaim’d :
 ‘ In arms of valour radiant shone the chief :
 ‘ And like a beam of fire,’ they said, ‘ he stood.
 ‘ The king of Lochlin, straight, prepar’d the feast 65
 ‘ And bid the blooming Trenmor there attend.
 ‘ Three festive days at Gormal’s windy tow’rs
 ‘ He spent, and in the combat got his choice.

‘ No hero could the land of Lochlin boast,
 ‘ That yielded not to Trenmor’s sturdy arm. 70
 ‘ In praise of Morven’s king, the first of men,
 ‘ That bounding o’er the billowing ocean came,
 ‘ With festive songs the shell of joy went round.

‘ Now, when the fourth grey morn arose, his ship
 ‘ The hero launch’d; and for the rushing wind 75
 ‘ He waited walking on the silent shore;
 ‘ For loud and distant, in the verdant grove
 ‘ He heard the blast blow murn’ring thro’ the trees.

‘ From head to foot array’d in arms of steel
 ‘ A son of woody Gormal then appear’d. 80
 ‘ Red was his cheek, and bright his flowing hair.
 ‘ His skin like Morven’s snow! Mild roll’d his eye
 ‘ Of finest blue; and, smiling as he spoke,
 ‘ The valiant king of swords he thus address’d:
 “ Stay, Trenmor, stay; thou first of mighty men, 85
 “ As yet thou hast not conquer’d Lonval’s son.
 “ My pow’rful sword the brave has often met,
 “ And wise men shun the danger of my bow.”

“ Thou bright-hair’d youth,” then Trenmor quick
 reply’d;
 “ With Lonval’s son I scorn to fight. Thy arm, 90
 “ O beauty’s sunbeam, still is green with youth.—
 “ To Gormal’s dark-brown hinds now speed thy way.”

“ The youth reply’d: “ But I with Trenmor’s steel,
 “ Exulting in my fame, will soon retire:
 “ And him, who conquer’d Trenmor, king of swords, 95
 “ Th’ enraptur’d virgins shall with smiles surround.
 “ Whilst I thro’ thousands bear thy glitt’ring spear
 “ With point erected, its amazing length
 “ With sighs of love thy sighing shall admire.”

“ Then Morven’s king with anger thus reply’d: 100
 “ By thee my beauteous spear shall ne’er be borne.—
 “ On echoing Gormal’s shore thy pallid corpse,
 “ In tears o’erwhelmed, shall thy mother find;

“ And, bending o'er the dark blue rolling main,
“ Shall view the sails of him, who slew her son.” 105

“ I will not lift the spear,” “ reply'd the youth :
“ With age my tender arm not yet is steel'd.
“ But with the feather'd dart a distant foe
“ I'm skill'd to pierce. That heavy mail of steel
“ Throw down :—for, with it Trenmor o'er is clad. 110
“ *Here*, on the ground my mail I first do lay
“ Now throw thy dart, O king of Morven's hills.”

“ He look'd—and saw the heaving of her breast !
“ The king's own sister ! She, in Gormal's halls,
“ On him had look'd, and lov'd his face of youth. 115
“ Direct from Trenmor's hand now dropt the spear !
“ And to the ground his blushing face he bent !
“ For, like a beam of light descending on
“ The son's of darkness from the nightly cave
“ Emerging to revisit realms of day, 120
“ When the sun's rays depress their aching eyes,
“ Appear'd she dazzling to his vanquish'd sight.”

“ Chief of the windy Morven,” “ said the maid
“ With snowy arms,” “ within thy bounding ship,
“ Far from the love of Corla, let me rest. 125
“ For he with terror Inibáca strikes,
“ Like desert-thunder. In his gloomy pride
“ He makes his suit, and shakes ten thousand spears.”

“ Rest thou in peace,” “ the mighty Trenmor said,
“ Behind my father's shield.—I will not fly 130
“ Tho' this proud chief ten thousand spears do boast.”

“ Three days he waited on the lonely shore
“ Anxious for fight, and sent his horn abroad,

- ‘ To summon Corla from his sounding hills
- ‘ To meet in combat : but no answer came. 135
- ‘ Then, down the stormy king of Lochlin came,
- ‘ Upon the roaring shore to hold his feast ;
- ‘ And gave to Trenmor the white-bosom’d maid.’

“Twas then Fingál to Lochlin’s king begun :

- ‘ Within the veins of thy contending foe, 140
- ‘ O king of Lochlin, flows thy native blood.
- ‘ With mutual ardour fir’d for strife of spears,
- ‘ Our fam’lies met.—But often in the hall
- ‘ They feasted, and sent round the joy of shells.
- ‘ Let gladness brighten on thy clouded face, 145
- ‘ And harps symphonious greet thy ravish’d ears.
- ‘ With dreadful force, as rolls thy stormy main,
- ‘ Forth rush’d thy valour ; when thy thund’ring voice,
- ‘ Loud as the voice of thousands in the fight,
- ‘ Gave echoing roar. To-morrow to the wind 150
- ‘ O Agandecca’s brother, raise thy sails.
- ‘ When her I mention, on my mournful soul
- ‘ Bright as the beam of noon she comes ! Thy tears
- ‘ For that fair beauty I beheld, and spar’d
- ‘ In Starno’s halls thy life ; when my bright steel 155
- ‘ With slaughter redd’n’d, and my feeling eye
- ‘ Shed tears of pity for the hapless maid !
- ‘ Or rather, if to fight thou still incline,
- ‘ To thee the choice of combat I propose,
- ‘ Free as to Trenmor thy forefathers gave : 160
- ‘ That thy departure glorious fame may crown,
- ‘ As beams the setting sun upon the west.’

Then said the king of Lochlin’s roaring waves :

- ‘ Never with thee, O king of Morven’s race,
- ‘ Who lead’st a thousand heroes in thy train, 165
- ‘ Will Swaran fight. In Starno’s sounding halls

‘ Thee, when beyond my own few were thy years,
 ‘ I saw, and struck with vast amazement said :
 ‘ When shall I lift the spear like great Fingál ?’
 ‘ On shaggy Malmor’s side we heretofore, 170
 ‘ Renowned warrior, have together fought ;
 ‘ When to thy halls I on my ocean borne,
 ‘ Luxuriant feasted with a thousand shells.
 ‘ The name of him, who overcame in fight,
 ‘ Let sweetest bards to future years record ; 175
 ‘ For noble was the strife of Malmor’s heath.

‘ But num’rous ships of Lochlin now remain,
 ‘ Whose vanquish’d youths on Lena’s plains have fall’n.
 ‘ *These* take, O king of Morven, and henceforth
 ‘ In firmest compact stand with Swaran join’d. 180
 ‘ And when thy sons to Gormal’s mossy tow’rs
 ‘ In future times shall come ; for them shall shine
 ‘ The feast of sounding shells ; whilst on the vale
 ‘ The joys of combat shall await their call.’

‘ Fingál no ship’ (reply’d the king) ‘ will take, 185
 ‘ Nor land of many hills. The desert plain
 ‘ Me satisfies with all its deer and woods.
 ‘ Now on thy raging, roaring main again,
 ‘ Thou noble friend of Agandeecca rise.
 ‘ To morning-beams thy snow-white sails expand,
 ‘ And straight to Gormal’s echoing hills return.’ 190

‘ Blest be thy soul, thou noble king of shells,’
 Said stormy Swaran of the dark-brown shield.
 ‘ In peace, thou art the gentle gale of spring ;
 ‘ But, when in war, the raging mountain storm. 195
 ‘ O Morven’s king, my hand of friendship take,
 ‘ And let thy plaintive bards lament the slain.
 ‘ Lochlin’s fall’n sons let Erin give to earth,

‘ And raise the mossy stones of their renown ; 200
 ‘ That long time hence the children of the north
 ‘ May see the place where their forefathers’ fought ;
 ‘ And, when some hunter on a mossy tomb,
 ‘ Fatigued with the chase, leans ; he may say,
 ‘ Fingál and Swaran here, in ancient times,
 ‘ Heroes of fame, in direful combat met. 205
 ‘ Thus shall some son of chase hereafter speak,
 ‘ And our renown to latest times remain.’

‘ Swaran,’ replied the king of desert hills,
 ‘ To-day our fame is greatest. Like a dream
 ‘ Soon shall we vanish, and no sound be heard 210
 ‘ Where now the battle roars.—Within the heath
 ‘ Our mould’ring tombs will in oblivion lie.
 ‘ Strictly to mark our place of final rest
 ‘ The sons of chase will baffle. Yet, in song
 ‘ In future times our names perhaps may sound ; 215
 ‘ But not the strength of our resounding arms.
 ‘ O Ossian, Carril, Ullin, sons of song,
 ‘ Who know the names of heroes long gone hence ;
 ‘ The deeds of other years now sweetly sing.
 ‘ Let dulcet sounds dispel the gloom of night, 220
 ‘ And radiant morn return with growing joy.’

A hundred tuneful harps our voices join’d,
 Whilst to the kings we gave the choral song.
 Then Swaran’s face with bright’ning gladness shone.
 So heav’ns full moon darts forth her splendid rays, 225
 When sable clouds no longer intervene ;
 But leave her calm and broad in lucid skies.

’Twas then of Carril, chief of other times,
 Fingál enquir’d : ‘ Where is great Semo’s son,
 ‘ King of the misty isle ? Has he retir’d, 230

‘ (Like some green meteor baneful in its course,
 ‘ Yet soon extinct) to Tura’s dreary cave?’

Carril of other times to him reply’d :
 ‘ In Tura’s dreary cave Cuchullin lies :
 ‘ His hand reposes on his sword of strength. 235
 ‘ In thoughts about the unsuccessful fight
 ‘ Wholly absorb’d, now mourns the king of spears :
 ‘ For, vict’ry oft’ has crown’d his glitt’ring steel.
 ‘ But now—Fingál, to grace thy side he sends
 ‘ His sword of war. For, like the desert storm, 240
 ‘ His foes are scatter’d by thy dreadful might.
 ‘ Take, O Fingál, the hero’s glitt’ring steel ;
 ‘ For, like the mist by rustling winds dispell’d,
 ‘ His once great fame is now for ever gone.’

‘ By no means so,’ reply’d the gen’rous king : 245
 Cuchullin’s sword Fingál shall never take.
 ‘ In war his arm is potent, and his fame
 ‘ Shall never vanish. Many heretofore
 ‘ In fight have fail’d ; who, like the sun of heav’n,
 ‘ Beam’d forth with radiance in their future deeds. 250

‘ O Swaran, of resounding woods the king,
 ‘ Give all thy grief away, and courage take :
 ‘ For, *e'en the vanquish'd are renown'd, if brave.*
 ‘ So yields the sun behind a southern cloud,
 ‘ And all his lustre for a season fades ; 255
 ‘ But soon on verdant hills reshine his rays.

‘ Grumal of Cona was a mighty chief :—
 ‘ On ev’ry coast in deathful strife he fought.
 ‘ In blood his soul rejoiced, and his ear
 ‘ With din of arms was ravish’d. Forth he pour’d 260
 ‘ On sounding Craea’s shore his warriors bold :

‘ And Craea’s king returning from his grove
 ‘ (Where in the ring of Brumo to the stone
 ‘ Of secret pow’r he spoke) the hero met.

‘ Between the heroes for the snow-white maid 265
 ‘ Fierce was the battle. Craea’s daughter’s fame,
 ‘ At Cona’s streams had reached Grumal’s ear.
 ‘ The maid, white-bosom’d, or to gain, or die
 ‘ On echoing Craea this brave hero vow’d.
 ‘ Three days successive they in combat strove, 270
 ‘ And vanquish’d Grumal on the fourth was bound.

‘ Far from his friends, they plac’d this pow’rful chief
 ‘ In Brumo’s horrid circle; where (they said)
 ‘ Oft’ round the stone of their perpetual fear
 ‘ The shady ghosts of the departed howl’d : 275
 ‘ Yet, afterwards, as glows a heav’ly beam,
 ‘ This hero shone; for by his mighty hand
 ‘ They, vanquish’d, fell :—and Grumal had his fame.

‘ Raise, bards of other times, your voices raise,
 ‘ In praise of heroes, with exalted strains : 280
 ‘ That on their fame my wearied soul may rest,
 ‘ And to be sad the mind of Swaran cease.’

In Mora’s heath they lay; where nightly winds
 Brush’d o’er the heroes with a rustling sound.
 A hundred voices in full chorus rose: 285
 A hundred harps with skilful hands were strung
 In strains symphonious they, of other times
 And chiefs of former years, in concert sung.

But when shall I now meet the tuneful bard ;
 Or, hear again my great forefathers’ fame ? 290
 The once sweet lyre on Morven is unstrung,

And Cona now no more with music sounds.
 Dead with the mighty is the pleasing bard,
 And, from the desert, fame has wing'd her way.
 With trembling beams of east, forth breaks the morn, 295
 And glimmers on grey Cromla's swarthy head.
 The horn of Swaran sounds on Lena's plain,
 And ocean's sons assemble at the call.
 Silent and sad they mount the rolling waves,
 And Ullin's blast blows brisk behind their sails. 300
 White as the mist, which rolls on Morven's hills,
 Their snow-white sails float swiftly o'er the main.

‘ My dogs, the fleet, long bounding sons of chase, }
 ‘ Call,’ said Fingál :—‘ but call white-breasted Bran :
 ‘ The surly strength of Luath also call, 305
 ‘ Fillan and Ryno—but *he* is not here.
 ‘ My son rests silent on the bed of death !
 ‘ Fillan and Fergus, blow my sounding horn,
 ‘ And let the joy of chase directly rise :
 ‘ That at the lake of swiftly bounding roes 310
 ‘ Cromla's wild, starting deer may hear the sound.’

Along the wood extends the shrill alarm,
 And heathy Cromla's sons forthwith arise.
 At once fly off, grey bounding thro' the heath,
 A thousand dogs resolved on the game. 315
 A deer by ev'ry dog fell in the course ;
 But three most stately, by white-breasted Bran.
 The pleasure of the king to magnify,
 Near to Fingál he brought them in their flight.

At Ryno's tomb fell one close-hunted deer ; 320
 And thence Fingál's late heavy grief return'd.
 O'er him, who once was foremost in the chase,
 He saw how peaceful lay the massy stone.

- ‘ With joy the feast of Cromla to partake,
- ‘ No more, my son?’ he said, ‘ shalt thou arise.
- ‘ Soon in oblivion will thy tomb be lost,
- ‘ And grass grow rank upon the vanish’d mound.
- ‘ The sons of weakness o’er thy grave shall pass,
- ‘ Nor shall they know that there the mighty lie.

325

- ‘ Ossian and Fillan, children of my strength,
- ‘ And Gaul, thou king of blue and glitt’ring swords,
- ‘ The hill to Tura’s cave let us ascend,
- ‘ And seek the king of Erin’s battles there.
- ‘ Are these then Tura’s walls? They, on the heath,
- ‘ Rise grey and lonely; whilst the king of shells
- ‘ Is sad, and empty are the sounding halls.
- ‘ Come, let us find the valiant king of swords,
- ‘ And freely all our joy to him impart.
- ‘ But, Fillan, do I there Cuchullin see,
- ‘ Or stands a beam of smoke upon the heath:
- ‘ The breeze of Cromla meets my yielding eyes,
- ‘ And I my friend distinctly can’t discern.’

330

335

- ‘ Fingál,’ reply’d the youth. ‘ ’tis Semo’s son!
- ‘ Sad is the hero and o’erwhelm’d with gloom;
- ‘ Whilst by his sword supported is his hand.
- ‘ Hail, son of battle, breaker of the shields!’

345

- ‘ And hail to thee!’ Cuchullin then reply’d:
- ‘ And hail to all bleak Morven’s warlike sons!
- ‘ Thy presence, O Fingál, beams forth delight!
- ‘ Such and so genial are the sun’s bright rays
- ‘ To the chill hunter on bleak Cromla’s hills,
- ‘ Who for a season hath its absence mourn’d,
- ‘ When darting forth between the clouds they fall.
- ‘ Thy sons, like stars attendant on thy course,
- ‘ In their degree dispel the nightly gloom.

350

355

‘ It was not thus, Fingál, thou heretofore
 ‘ Me saw’st returning from the desert wars ;
 ‘ When the proud emp’rors of the world had fled,
 ‘ And joy returned to the hil_i or hinds.’

‘ Many, Cuchullin, are thy words,’ then said 360
 Connan of small renown ; ‘ O Semo’s son,
 ‘ Many and vaunting are thy swelling words ;
 ‘ But where are found thy mighty deeds in war ?
 ‘ Why, to th’ assistance of thy feeble sword,
 ‘ Did we along the briny ocean come ? 365
 ‘ Whilst Connan fights the battles in thy stead,
 ‘ Thou to thy cave of sorrow tak’st thy way.
 ‘ Resign to me these glitt’ring arms of light :
 ‘ Them yield, thou son of Erin, as my due.’

To him reply’d the chief : ‘ Thou gloomy youth, 370
 ‘ No hero ever sought Cuchuillin’s arms :
 ‘ And had a thousand heroes, great in might,
 ‘ Them sought ; vain were the attempt, thou gloomy youth.
 ‘ As long as Erin’s valiant warriors liv’d,
 ‘ I fled not to the lonely cave of grief.’ 375

‘ Youth of the feeble arm,’ then said Fingál ;
 ‘ Keep silence, Connan. For Cuchuillin’s name
 ‘ Ranks high in battle ; and the desert round
 ‘ With terror sounds. Oft’ have I heard thy fame
 ‘ Thou stormy chief of Innis-fail. Now spread 380
 ‘ Thy snowy sails, and to the isle of mist
 ‘ Direct thy course ; lo, leaning on a rock,
 ‘ Stands sad Bragéla waiting thy return.
 ‘ Her tender eyes fast flow with crystal tears,
 ‘ Whilst tressy ringlets from her heaving breasts 385
 ‘ By boist’rous winds are in disorder blown.
 ‘ To hear the voice of those, who ply the oars ;

‘ The naval songs, and sounds of distant harps ;
 ‘ Eager she listens to the winds of night.’—

‘ Long may,’ said he, ‘ she listen ; but in vain : 390
 ‘ For never shall Cuchullin more return.
 ‘ To raise the sigh of her fast-throbbing breast,
 ‘ How can I fair Bragéla’s face behold ?
 ‘ In other battles of the pointed spear,
 ‘ Fingal, success and vict’ry crown’d my arms.’ 395

‘ Success again,’ reply’d the king of shells,
 ‘ Success *again* shall crown thy glitt’ring steel.
 ‘ As spreads the branchy tree of Cromlk’s groves,
 ‘ Cuchullin’s fame hereafter shall extend.
 ‘ For various battles, chief, await thy aid ; 400
 ‘ And num’rous wounds shall grace thy valiant hand.
 ‘ Bring hither, Oscar, the late bounding deer,
 ‘ And, straight, prepare the joyful feast of shells :
 ‘ That after danger we may gather joy,
 ‘ And by our presence yield our friends delight.’ 405

We sat, we feasted, and we sweetly sung.
 Cuchullin’s soul rose in the festive joy :
 The wonted vigour to his arm return’d,
 And gladness brighten’d on his gloomy face.
 Melodious Ullin first commenc’d the song, 410
 And Carril lifted high his tuneful voice.
 In concert with th : bards I often join’d,
 And sung of battles of the shining spear :—
 Battles ! where often I my part sustain’d ;
 But now in battle I no more am seen. 415
 Of my first actions silent is the fame,
 And at my fathers’ tombs I sit forlorn.

Thus pass'd they the night in festive song,
And brought the welcome morning back with joy,
Upon the shady heath Fingál arose, 430
And shock with force his beamy, glitt'ring spear.
He mov'd first tow'rd Lena's verdant plains,
And, like a ridge of fire, we form'd his train.
Said Morven's king: ' Now spread the bending sail,
• And catch the winds, that strong from Lena pour.' 435
With songs upon the rolling wave we rose,
And rush'd along the foaming main with joy.

END OF BOOK SIXTH.

Comala :

A DRAMATIC POEM.

ARGUMENT.

THIS poem is valuable on account of the light it throws on the antiquity of Ossian's compositions. The Caracul mentioned here, is the same with Caracalla, the son of Severus, who in the year 211 commanded an expedition against the Caledonians. The variety of the measure (in the original) shews that the poem was originally set to music, and perhaps presented before the chiefs upon solemn occasions. Tradition has handed down the story more complete than it is in the poem. "Comala, the daughter of Sarno, king of Inistore, (or Orkney Islands), fell in love with Fingal, the son of Omhal, at a feast, to which her father had invited him, (Fingal, B. III.) upon his return from Lochlin, after the death of Agandecca. Her passion was so violent, that she disguised herself like a youth and followed him, in pursuit of employment in his wars. She was soon discovered by Hidallan, the son of Lamor, one of Fingal's heroes, whose love she had slighted sometime before. Her romantic passion and beauty recommended her so much to the king, that he had resolved to make her his wife; when news was brought him of Caracalla's expedition. He marched to stop the progress of the enemy, and Comala attended him. He left her on a hill, within sight of Caracul's army, when he himself went to battle; having previously promised, if he survived, to return that night."—The sequel of the story may be gathered from the poem itself.

THE PERSONS.

FINGAL.	MELILCOMA	} Daughters of Morni.
HIDALLAN.	DERSAGRENA	
COMALA.	BARDS.	

DERSAGRENA.

THE chase is over :—and on Ardven's shore
No noise is heard, except the torrent's roar.

From Crona's banks, O Morni's fair, retire :
 Lay down the bow, and take the trembling lyre.
 Let night come on with songs of sweetest strains,
 And let our joy be great on Ardven's plains. 5

MELILCOMA.

And night indeed *comes* on, thou blue-ey'd maid :—
 Grey night grows dim along the dusky glade.
 At Crona's stream a deer of swiftest flight
 I plainly saw. He, thro' the gloom of night,
 A mossy bank appear'd ; but soon he fled,
 And round his branchy horns a meteor play'd.
 From Crona's clouds the ghosts of other days
 Look'd down, whilst awe sat on the bloodless face. 10

DERSAGRENA.

These are the sure forerunners of our grief ! 15
 Fingál is dead—of shields the potent chief !
 My yielding mind the justest fear assails :
 The king is dead : and Cárcal prevails !
 Comála rise—and change thy hopes to fears :—
 O Sarno's daughter, quit thy rocks in tears.
 Low thy lov'd youth lies, sep'rate from his host,
 And on our hills already flies his ghost. 20

MELILCOMA.

There sits forlorn Comála wet in tears !
 Two grey dogs, near her, shake their shaggy ears,
 And catch the volant breeze.—The weeping fair
 Rests, on her arm, her red cheek ; and her hair,
 Once neatly tress'd in ringlets, floats behind
 In wild disorder by the mountain-wind.
 She tow'rs the field turns her blue rolling eyes
 (Th' appointed place) and as she turns, she cries : 25
 ‘ Where art thou, O Fingál ? Art thou not found ?
 ‘ For, fast the gloom of night is gath'ring round.’ 30

COMALA.

O Carun of the streams, thou winding flood,
Why do I see thy waters roll in blood ?

Say, has the echo of the martial roar

35

With din terrific reach'd thy sounding shore ?

Does something sudden back my lover keep,

Or, does the calm-ey'd king of Moryen sleep ?

Rise, moon, thou daughter of the lucid sky !

Bright from between thy clouds shine forth, that I

40

Upon the field (his promise to fulfil)

May him behold array'd in glitt'ring steel.

Or rather, let the meteor's pow'rful light,

That our departed fathers guides through night,

45

With its red blaze be present to my aid,

And shew where my fall'n hero now is laid.—

From sorrow, who will my protection prove ?

Or, who defend me from Hidallan's love ?

Long shall Comala search with wand'ring feet,

Before Fingál amidst his host she meet :—

50

Fingál, in brightness, like the morning beam,

That thro' the cloud of early show'rs doth gleam !

HIDALLAN.

[Coming by Fingal's order, to give warning of his return, and probably having heard her lamentations: out of revenge to Comala, gives her a false alarm; which ultimately proves fatal to the fair one.—At a distance from her he thus begins :]

To drive my friend from my reflecting soul,

Ye thickest mists of gloomy Crona roll :—

Roll on the hunter's path, like darkest night,

55

And hide his footsteps from my troubled sight.

The bands of battie scatter'd on the ground,

No crowding steps his sounding steel surround.

O Carun, roll thy purple streams of gore :

The people's chief is fall'n !—He is no more.

60

COMALA.

Son of the cloudy night, speak out and tell,
On Crona's banks what mighty chieftain fell ?
Was he in whiteness like high Ardven's snow,
In radiance blooming as the show'ry bow ?
Didst thou perceive, like mountain-mists, his hair, 65
Which soft and curling, in the heat, appear ?
Did he, like thunder, rush upon the foe ?
And were his feet swift as the desert roe ?

HIDALLAN.

O, that fair-leaning from her craggy cliff
I might behold his love, the child of grief ; 70
Her red eye shaded with the falling tear ;
Her blushing cheek half hid in her loose hair !
Blow, gentle breeze, along the ridgy rocks
And heave the charming virgin's heavy locks :
That I the whiteness of her arm may see,
And cheek, more lovely made by misery. 75

COMALA.

And is the son of Comhal fall'n in war ?
Chief of the mournful tale, I pray, declare.
The thunder rolls along the lofty ground,
And lightning flies on wings of fire around. 80
Yet these Comála do not terrify ;
Fingál is fall'n !—and she would gladly die.
Chief of the mournful tale, I pray thee tell,
If the shield-breaker in the battle fell ?

HIDALLAN.

The nations now are scatter'd on the plain,
And never shall they hear the chief again. 85

COMALA.

King of the world, confusion be thy bane !

And let destruction seize thee on the plain !

Few be thy steps to thy lone, silent grave,

And thou one virgin for thy mourner have.

90

Let her, Comála-like, find no relief

In youth's meridian, but the tear of grief !

But, O Hidallan, why didst thou me tell

That my lov'd hero in the battle fell ?

—Then, should I not have yet begun to mourn,

95

But thought I saw him o'er the rock return.

Whilst evening-dusk o'erspreads the open glade,

A tree might have deceiv'd me by its shade.

And, whilst the breeze along the hill was borne,

I also might have thought I heard his horn.—

100

O, that transported unto Caron's shore,

Where eddying waters roll with murm'ring roar ;

I might be present with my royal friend,

And on his cheek my warmest tears descend.

HIDALLAN.

Think not that Carun's banks are his last home :

105

On Ardven high the heroes raise his tomb.

O moon, look on them from thy cloudy height ;

And on his breast beam forth thy radiance bright.

That fair Comála may, with sorrows sad,

Behold her king in glittering armour clad.

110

COMALA.

Your hands now stay, sons of the op'ning grave,

Till of my love another view I have.

He left me at the busy chase alone,

Nor knew I that he to the war was gone.

He said, that he with evening would be here ;

115

But Morven's king does not as yet appear.

Son of the rock, who shak'st with tremor great,
Why did'st thou not foretel his sad defeat?
Thou hast beheld him in his youthful gore,
And never didst Comála tell, before! 120

MELILCOMA.

[Sees Fingal approaching, but takes him to be Caracul.]

What sound is that I hear on Ardven's height?
Who, in the vale, appears in armour bright?
Who, like the strength of rivers, roaring on,
When their full waters glitter to the moon,
Now comes with haste?—

COMALA.

[Abrupt]

—Who, but Comála's foe? 125
The emp'ror's son, that keeps the world in awe?
Ghost of Fingál, from thy bright cloud do thou
With surest aim direct Comála's bow.
As falls the desert-hart upon the plain,
So may he fall:—and by my arrow slain!

[She perceives it to be Fingal, but takes it to be his ghost.]

Amidst his num'rous hosts, it is Fingal!
At once to frighten and to please my soul,
Why com'st thou thus, my love?

FINGAL.

—Bards of the song,
The wars of streamy Carun raise.—Along
His proud demesnes now Caracul has fled 135
From my victorious arms, 'dismay'd with dread.
He sets far distant, like a meteor bright
(Inclosing in it's flames a ghost of night)
When forc'd to make for winds a speedy room,
From the dark woods it beams away the gloom. 140

As blows along my hills the sudden breeze,
 And murmurs plaintive in the bending trees,
 A voice I heard borne on the evening air:—
 Is it great Sarno's snowy-handed fair,
 Galmal's fair huntress?—From thy rocks appear,
 And thy lov'd voice, Comála, let me hear.

145

COMALA.

[still supposing it to be his ghost.]

That I, O son of death, repose may have;
 My love, now take me to thy resting cave!

FINGAL.

Come to the cave of my retir'd retreat.—
 The storm is ended—and, with genial heat,
 The sun shall beam upon the smiling fields
 Whilst peace around her wonted bounty yields.—
 Haste—echoing Cona's huntress, come away
 To the lone cave of my repose:—nor stay.

150

COMALA.

[Fingal seizes her hand.]

He with his fame returns—I can believe:—
 The right hand of his battles I perceive.
 But, till my soul can settle from its fear,
 I, near the rock, must rest a little *here*.
 O Morni's daughter, let the harp be strung,
 And airs melodious be most sweetly sung.

155

160

DERSAGRENA.

Three deer on Ardven has Comála slain,
 And on the rock the fire ascends amain.
 King of the woody Morven, bend thy feet
 To taste thy lov'd Comála's festive treat.

FINGAL.

Ye sons of song, your tuneful voices raise,
And swell with streamy Carun's wars your lays :
That my white-handed maid may them approve,
Whilst I behold the banquet of my love. 165

BARDS.

Joyful that we can feast without control,
The sons of battle fled, O Carun, roll 170
With streams loud roaring. For on our demesnes
The steed appears not ; but on other plains
The wings of their ambition, now are spread,
And peace her choicest gifts around shall shed.
The sun will now with mildest radiance rise,
And smiling shades descend from placid skies. 175
Aloud the echo of the chase shall sound,
And pendant shields our joyful halls surround.
We will rejoice that Carun's war is o'er,
Whilst still our hands are red with Lochlin's gore. 180

CHORUS.

‘ Joyful that we can feast without control,
‘ The sons of battle fled, O Carun, roll.’

MELILCOMA.

[Comala dies with her late fight, and Melilcoma proceeds.]

From airy heights, ye lightest mists, descend ;
And, ye pale moon-beams, her fled soul befriend !
Raise it on high—for near the rocky shade 185
Comála is no more ! Pale lies the maid !

FINGAL.

Does Starno's daughter now indeed lie low,
My much lov'd virgin with the breast of snow ?

When on my hills, where waters stream beneath
I sit ; Comala meet me on the heath.

190

HIDALLAN.

Ceased the huntress' voice on Galmar's plain ?
Why did I put the virgin's soul to pain !
When shall I joyful see thee, like the winds,
With swiftest course pursue the dark-brown hinds ?

FINGÅL.

Thou gloomy youth, within my halls again
Thou never more shalt feast, where pleasures reign.
Henceforth thou never shalt my chase pursue,
Nor shall my falling foes thy sword bedew.—
Me lead directly to her resting-place,
That I once more may view her lovely face !
Pale at the rock lies the once charming fair,
And chilly winds disturb her tressy hair !
Still, in the blast her bow-string yields a sound :
Her arrow broke as she fell to the ground.
The praise of Starno's daughter raise in song,
Whilst mountain-breezes bear her name along.

195

200

205

BARDS.

Around the maid, see ! glitt'ring meteors roll,
And friendly moon-beams lift her rising soul !
Around her, from her clouds, glad of their friend,
The awful faces of her fathers bend !
Amongst them Starno of the gloomy brow :
Fidallan's eyes red roll with fiery glow !
When shall thy hand of snowy whiteness rise,
And on our rocks thy voice our ears surprise ?
The maids shall seek thee on the heathy plain,
But never will they meet with thee again.
Yet to their slumbers thou at times shalt come
And settle peace within their souls at home :

210

215

And in their ears thy voice shall still remain,
Whilst gladly they in mind their dreams retain.

220

CHORUS.

Around the maid, bright glowing meteors roll,
And calmest moon-beams lift her rising soul.

END OF COMALA.

Conlath and Cuthona :

A POEM.

ARGUMENT.

CONLATH was the youngest of Morni's sons, and brother to the celebrated Gaul, who is so often mentioned in Ossian's poems. He was in love with Cuthona, the daughter of Rumar, when Toscar, the son of Kinfena, accompanied by Fercuth, his friend, arrived from Ireland, at Mora, where Conlath dwelt. He was hospitably received; and, according to the custom of the times, feasted three days with Conlath. On the fourth day he set sail; and, coasting the island of waves (probably one of the Hebrides) he saw Cuthona hunting, fell in love with her, and carried her away by force in his ship. He was forced, by stress of weather, into I-thona, a desetisle. In the mean time, Conlath hearing of the rape, sailed after him; and found him on the point of sailing for the coast of Ireland. They fought; and they, and their followers, fell by mutual wounds. Cuthona did not long survive; for she died of grief the third day after. Fingal, hearing of their unfortunate death, sent Stormal, the son of Moran, to bury them, but forgot to send a bard to sing the funeral song over their tombs. The ghost of Conlath came, long after, to Ossian, to entreat him to transmit to posterity, his and Cuthona's fame. For it was the opinion of the times, that the souls of the deceased were not happy, till their elegies were composed by a bard.

DID Ossian hear a voice borne in the roar
Of vesper-blasts? Or did the days before
Long past, which never back again shall roll,
Descend, like evening sun-beams, on his soul?
Oft' the remembrance of those former days
Shines back upon my mind, like setting rays.
The noise of chase oft' I suppose renew'd;
And lift, in thought, the redd'ning spear of blood.
But Ossian heard a voice, tho' faint and light;—
Speak out, and say: ‘ Who art thou, son of night?’ 10
In sleep the sons of little men are low,
And in my hall the midnight breezes blow.

It is the shield perhaps of fam'd Fingal,
That echoes to the blast in Ossian's hall.
And, tho' I can't discern the pendant steel, 15
Yet sometimes it I with my fingers feel.
Yes, friend, I hear thee ;—and I much rejoice :
Long absent from my ear has been thy voice !
O gen'rous Morni's son to Ossian say
What bring's thee on thy shady cloud this way ? 20
Abide near thee the friends of hoary hair ?
Where is my Oscar, son of fame—say where ?
To thee, O Conlath, often he stood close,
When the loud din of battle rose.

GHOST OF CONLATH.

Within the rustling hall in sleep profound 25
Rests echoing Cona's voice of sweetest sound.
Can Ossian, in his hall upon the plain,
Sleep ; whilst his friends without their fame remain ?
The roaring sea round dark I-thona sounds,
And strangers see not our sepulchral mounds. 30
Son of the sounding Morven, say how long
Our fame shall be unnotic'd in the song ?

OSSIAN.

O that my eyes could see thee plain in sight,
As thou dim-sittest on thy cloud of night !
Dost thou like Lano's hazy mist appear, 35
Or, as an half extinguish'd meteor, clear ?
Speak of the texture of thy robe—and how ?—
Of what composed is thy airy bow ?—
—But he, upon his blast away is gone,
Like shades of mist before the scorching sun. 40
Down from thy wall now come, my sweetest lyre,
And with thy sound my rising soul inspire.
Let memory's brightness on I-thona rise,
That I my friends may have before my eyes.—

—And on the dark blue isle, in beaming light
Now Ossian's friends appear indeed in sight.
With its grey, mossy rocks, and bending trees,
The cave of Thona too he plainly sees.
Before its mouth a roaring stream is seen
And o'er its course bends Toscar, grave in mien.
Sad by his side is Fercuth, full of fears ;
And his lov'd maid sits distant, and in tears.
Blow the brisk winds deceptive o'er the main ?
Or, do I hear their words distinct and plain ?

45

50

TOSCAR.

The night was stormy. From their airy height
The groaning oaks came down with pond'rous weight :
The darkly tumbling sea, with dreadful roar
Beneath the blast clim'd up the rocky shore :
With dread approach the frequent lightning came
And shew'd the blasted fern by its bright gleam.—
And, still to add more terror to my plight,
Fercuth, I saw the sable ghost of night !
Upon that bank he stood in silent mood :
His robe of mist flew on the wind abroad :
His tears bespoke the grief, that in him wrought :
An aged man he seem'd, and full of thought.

55

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65

FERCUTH.

It was thy father, Toscar, who foresees
Among his noble race some near decease :
Such he, before the great Ma-rónnan died,
In visage seem'd on Cromla's shaggy side.
Ullin, where blows the wind of fragrant gales,
With matted grass how pleasant are thy vales !
Near thy blue rolling streams still silence reigns,
And genial sunbeams fall upon thy plains.
Soft sounds the lyre in Selama's mansion high,
And sweet on Cromla is the hunter's cry :—

70

75

But, in the dark I-thona we abide
 Amidst the storms, that swell the briny tide.
 The foaming waves above our rocks are white,
 And we stand trembling in the gloom of night.

80

TOSCAR.

Fercuth with locks of age, thou hoary head,
 Say whither is the soul of battle fled?
 In danger thee undaunted have I seen.
 And in the fight thy eyes with rapture keen.
 Say, whither is the soul of battle fled?

85

No danger could our fathers strike with dread.
 Go:—view the sea fast setting from its rage,
 And the late stormy winds, that now assuage.
 Yet still the billows tremble on the main,
 As tho' they fear'd the blast should come again.

90

But cast thy eyes upon the settling sea;
 For morn already on our rocks is grey.
 Soon from his east the sun will heave in sight,
 And radiant shine in all his pride of light.—

95

Before the gen'rous Conlath's halls with joy
 My largely spreading sails I lifted high:
 Then by the isle of billows did I steer,
 Where his lov'd maid pursu'd the bounding deer.
 'Twas then I saw her splendid as the beam,
 When from the cloud the sun is seen to gleam.

100

Down on her heaving breast her hair hung low,
 Whilst forward bending she drew tight the bow.
 Behind her round appear'd her arm, and white:
 So crystal snow appears on Croula's height.

'Thou huntress of the isle of waves,' I said,
 'Come to my soul, thou beauteous, lovely maid!'
 [But she in tears consumes her youthful age,
 And gen'rous Conlath's loves her thoughts engage.]
 'Say, charming maid, where can I find thy peace,
 'That I from grief Cuthona may release?'

105

110

CUTHONA.

A distant steep bends o'er the raging seas
 O'erspread with mossy rocks, and aged trees :
 At its broad basis rolling billows ride,
 And bounding roes are herding on its side.

The people call it Ardven, and *there* rise
 The tow'rs of Mora pointing to the skies.
There Conlath, standing on the highest cove,
 Looks o'er the main, to spy his only love.—
 —Return'd he saw the daughters of the chase,
 The eye cast down, and sorrow on the face. 120
 ‘ Ah ! where is Rumar's fair ?’ aloud he cry'd :—
 But vain the question !—For no voice reply'd.—
 Son of the distant land, I now confess
 With freedom, that on Ardven dwells my peace.

TOSCAR.

And to her peace Cuthona shall return ; 125
 To gen'rous Conlath's halls :—and cease to mourn.
 Toscar and he have been in friendship long,
 And in his hall I've join'd the festive throng.
 Rise, Ullin's gentle breezes ; mildly roar :
 And stretch my sails tow'rs Ardven's sounding shore. 130
 Cuthona shall on Ardven rest obtain :
 But Toscar's days be spent in grief and pain.
 Within the field, where sunny rays descend,
 I in my cave shall sit without a friend.
 The blast will make within my trees a noise, 135
 And I shall think it is Cuthona's voice.
 But then, far distant, will she be away,
 And in the halls of mighty Conlath stay.

CUTHONA.

Oh ! what is that dim cloud, that now appears ?
 My father's ghosts along (I see) it bears !

115

120

125

135

140

The skirts of their long floating robes I see,
 Like rolling mists, that wat'ry are and grey.—
 When, Rumar, shall I fall, and be at ease ?
 For death approaching sad Cuthona sees.
 One farewell-look will not my Conlath give, 145
 Before the narrow house shall me receive ?

OSSIAN.

Yes, surely, he a look will cast on thee :
 He comes, O maid, along the rolling sea.
 Dark is the death of Toscar on his spear,
 And on his side a wound I see him bear. 150
 At Thona's cave, where murm'ring billows sound,
 Pallid he lies, and shews his ghastly wound.
 ' My love, where art thou with thy tears ?' he cries ;
 ' Cuthona dear, the chief of Mora dies !'—

Dim on my mind the vision grows at length, 155
 And I no more behold the chiefs of strength.
 But, O ye bards to sing in future years,
 Remember Conlath's fall with mournful tears.
 Before his day did this bold warrior fall,
 And sadness darken'd in his stately hall. 160
 His shield upon the wall his mother view'd ;
 And wept, when she beheld it wet with blood.
 Knowing her hero would no more return,
 She was on Mora heard his death to mourn.
 Dost thou Cuthona on thy rock remain 165
 In paleness, near the chiefs in combat slain ?
 Night unto day, and day to night apace
 Succeeds ; but none appears their tomb to raise.
 From thee the screaming fowls, in frights, do fly,
 And tears incessant trickle from thy eye. 170
 Pallid, as from a lake in marshy ground,
 A watry cloud proceeds, still art thou found.

The desert sons soon chanc'd to come that way,
And lifeless on the ground they found her clay.

A massy tomb they o'er the heroes raise,

175

And she at Conlath's side obtains a place.

No more, O Conlath, to my dreams come down,
For thou hast now receiv'd thy due renown.

From my still hall thy voice far distant keep,
That peaceful in the night may be my sleep.

180

O that my friends could clean forgotten lie,
Till my lone footsteps cease to meet the eye !

Till I at last with joy among them come,
And lay my limbs of age within the silent tomb.

END OF CONLATH AND CUTHONA.

The War of Caros:

A POEM.

ARGUMENT.

CAROS is probably the noted usurper Carausius, by birth a Menapian, who assumed the purple in the year 284; and, seizing on Britain, defeated the Emperor Maximian Herculius in several naval engagements, which gives propriety to his being called in this poem the king of ships. He repaired Agricola's wall, in order to obstruct the incursions of the Caledonians; and when he was employed in that work, it appears he was attacked by a party under the command of Oscar, the son of Ossian. This battle is the foundation of the present poem, which is addressed to Malvina, the daughter of Toscar.

BRING, Toscar's daughter, bring the trembling lyre :
The soul of Ossian brightens with the song.
In semblance, such appears the dusky field,
When darkness hides the circumambient hills
And on the sunny plain slow grows the shade. 5

Near Crona's rock with shaggy moss o'erhung,
My lovely son, Malvina, I behold,
But 'tis mere vapour—the white desert mist
Illum'd with tinges by the western beam :—
Yet lovely is the mist, that Oscar's form 10
Assumes !—Ye winds, when ye on Ardven's side
Loud roar, from it your wasting force avert.

Who, with the distant murmur of a song,
Comes tow'rs my son ? His staff is in his hand,

And on the wind loose flows his grizly hair.
 Joy surely lightens on his anxious face,
 And backward often he to Caros looks.
 Who is it, but sweet Ryno of the song,
 That went to view the station of the foe !
 ' Say, how does Caros, king of vessels, act ?'
 The son of the now mournful Ossian said :
 ' Bard of the times of old, to me declare,
 ' Does he *the wings of his ambition* spread ?'

15

‘ He spreads them, Oscar,’ said the answ’ring bard,
 ‘ But that alone behind his gather’d heap.
 ‘ Over his rocks with fear he trembling looks,
 ‘ And sees thee dreadful, as the ghost of night,
 ‘ That to his vessel rolls the turbid wave.’

25

‘ First of my bards,’ says Oscar, haste thy way
 ‘ And take Fingál’s bright spear. To its dread point
 ‘ Affix a flame, and to the winds of heaven
 ‘ With menace shake it. Bid him, in the song,
 ‘ With quick approach to quit his rolling wave.
 ‘ Let Caros know my strong desire for fight,
 ‘ And that my bow is weary of the chase
 ‘ Of echoing Cona. Tell him that far hence
 ‘ The strong abide—and that my arm is young.’

30

35

Amidst the warblings of the martial song
 He went, and Oscar rear’d his voice on high.
 As sounds a cave, when rough before its mouth
 Togarma’s turbid main, with thund’ring roar,
 Its massy billows rolls ; and raging winds
 Impetuons meet its trees : his heroes’ ears
 On Ardven’s airy plain, it rousant reach’d.
 Like gathering streams upon the mountain plain,
 When after rain, their course they proudly roll ;
 Around my son in thick’ning clouds they throng.

40

45

Then Ryno to the mighty Caros came
And struck his flaming spear ; and cry'd aloud :
‘ Come thou, that sittest on the rolling main,
‘ To Oscar's battle. Far remov'd from hence
‘ Abides Fingál amidst the dulcet song
‘ Of his sweet bards on Morven ; whilst his hair
‘ In ringlets floats wild in his aulic gale.
‘ Down by his side is laid his dreadful spear,
‘ And near it rests his bossy, orbed shield,
‘ But dim, in semblance like the darken'd moon.
‘ To Oscar's battle fearless sped thy way,
‘ For quite alone th' unaided hero stands.’

He came not o'er broad Carun's rolling flood ;— 60
Then with his martial song the bard return'd.
Grey night grows dim on Crona ; and around
Is spread the feast of shells. A hundred oaks
Burn to the wind, and o'er the nightly heath
Faint gleams the light ; whilst through the glim'ring beam 65
The ghosts of Ardven pass, and faintly shew
Their dim and distant forms. Half viewless too
Upon her meteor bright Comála sits.
Like the dark moon behind the mist of night,
Sullen and dim is dark Hidallan seen. 70

‘ Why art thou sad ?’ said Ryno [for the chief
No other eye perceiv’d]—‘ Why art thou sad,
‘ Hidallan ? Hast thou not thy fame receiv’d ?
‘ Before the songs of Ossian, on the wind
‘ (When from thy cloud, to hear the solemn dirge 75
‘ Of Morven’s bard, thou didst attentive bend ;)
‘ Amidst the sound, thy bright’ning ghost arose.
‘ And dost thou see the hero,’ Oscar said
‘ Dim as the meteor in the gloom of night ?
‘ Say, Ryno, how—the chief of such renown 80

‘ In our forefathers’ days!—say how he fell?
 ‘ On Cona’s rocks his sounding name remains!
 ‘ The streamlets of his hills oft’ have I seen!’

‘ Fingál had driv’n Hidallan from his wars,’
 Reply’d the bard.—‘ For Iorn Comála’s fate

85

‘ The royal soul was sad, and his pain’d eyes
 ‘ No longer could upon Hidallan look.
 ‘ Lonely and sad, along the heathy plain,
 ‘ He* slow and silent mov’d. Down by his side
 ‘ Disorder’d hang his arms. His ruffled hair

90

‘ Loose from his helmet flies. The bursting tear
 ‘ Resistless trickles from his down-cast eyes,
 ‘ And from his breast half silent stole the sigh.
 ‘ Three days before to Lamor’s halls he came,
 ‘ The mossy halls (his ancestral seat)

95

‘ At Balva’s streams; unseen, alone he stray’d.
 ‘ *There* Lamor sat alone beneath a tree;

‘ For, he his people, to the aid of war,

‘ Had with Hidallan sent.—Close at his feet

100

‘ The streamlet ran, and on his staff repos’d
 ‘ His head of age, and sightless are his eyes;
 ‘ Whilst o’er he hums the song of other times.
 ‘ His ear perceiv’d Hidallan’s feet approach;
 ‘ For, well his steps the aged father knew.

“ Is Lamor’s son return’d?” ‘ he then exclaim’d,’ 105
 “ Or do I hear the footsteps of his ghost?

“ Amidst the wars, on sounding Carun’s banks

“ Son of the aged Lamor, hast thou fall’n?

“ Or, if I really hear Hidallan’s feet,

“ Where are the mighty in the deeds of war?

110

“ Where, my brave warriors, with their echoing shields,

“ With thee, Hidallan, wonted to return?

“ On winding Carun’s banks (say) have they fall’n?”

“ No :” “ said the youth, big with a heaving sigh ;
 “ Still, Lamor’s people live. And on the field 115
 “ Renown, my father, crowns their valiant deeds.
 “ But from Hidallan fame hath wing’d her flight !
 “ Alone, when loud the roar of battle grows,
 “ On Balva’s banks now I must sit *alone.*”

“ But my forefathers never sat alone :”— 120
 “ The rising pride of Lamor then reply’d.
 “ Never, when loud the roar of battle rose,
 “ Sat they on Balva’s silent banks *alone.*
 “ Behold’st thou not that tomb, tho’ my dim eyes
 “ Discern it not ? There brave Garmallon rests 125
 “ Who never fled from war—but nobly stood.
 “ Come, thou renown’d in battle ;” “ then he cries,
 “ Come to thy father’s tomb !—Garmallon !—Ah !—
 “ Where is my fame ?—My son has fled from war !”

“ Again Hidallan answer’d, with a sigh : 130
 “ King of the streamy Balva ! Why torment
 “ My troubled soul ? Lamor, I never fear’d.
 “ Through sad vexation for Comála’s fate,
 “ Fingál discharg’d Hidallan from his wars.
 “ Go to the grisled streamlets of thy land, 135
 “ And moulder,” “ said he,” like a leafless oak,
 “ Down over Balva, bent by forcive winds
 “ Torn from its sapless root, no more to grow !”

“ And must I hear,” “ said Lamor in reply,
 “ The lonely tread of weak Hidallan’s feet ? 140
 “ When thousands are renown’d in strife of war,
 “ Shall *he* above my grisled streamlets bend ?
 “ Spirit of fam’d Garmallon ! To his place
 “ Of final rest, sad Lamor hence convey !
 “ His eyes are dark : his heaving soul is sad, 145
 “ And now his son has ever lost his fame !”

“ Where,” said the youth to gladden Lamor’s soul,
 “ Shall I, in search of honour, take my way ?
 “ From whence, amidst renown, shall I return,
 “ That gladly he may hear my sounding arms ? 150
 “ If to the chase of hinds perchance I go,
 “ My fame will not be heard : nor with his hands,
 “ For joy at my arrival from the hill
 “ Will Lamor feel my dogs : nor, of his heights,
 “ Nor, of the dark-brown deer, that starting browse 155
 “ Upon his desert lands, will he enquire.”

“ As falls,” said Lamor, “ some lorn leafless oak,
 “ So must I fall ! Upon an airy rock
 “ Stately it grew, but by the nightly storm
 “ Of meadless course, uprooted down it fell ! 160
 “ Mournful, upon my native hills, my ghost,
 “ For my lov’d youth Hidallan, will be seen.
 “ Say, will not ye, ye thickly-rolling mists,
 “ Of dusky night, him from my eyes enveil ?
 “ My son ! Delay not—haste to Lamor’s hall : 165
 “ There pendant are our ancestral arms.
 “ Garmallon’s sword select and bring away—
 “ The sword, which from a struggling foe he took.”

“ The sword, with all its sparkling, studded thong,
 “ He went and brought, and to his father gave. 170
 “ The grey-hair’d hero, dim with age extreme,
 “ The point examin’d with his hand, and said :

“ My son ! conduct me to Garmallon’s tomb :
 “ Grey-rising near that tree of rustling sound.
 “ The once long grass is wither’d on the ground, 175
 “ For there the whistling breeze I lately heard.
 “ A little, murmur’ring stream adjacent flows,
 “ And rolls its course to Balva’s winding flood.

“ There let me rest; for 'tis the height of noon,
“ And scorching on our fields the sun-beam falls.” 180

“ He to Garmallon's tomb his father led;
“ And his son's side the hoary Lamor pierc'd!
“ They sleep together; and their hills antique
“ On Balva's banks are mould'ring fast away.
“ There ghosts, at noon, of shady forms are seen;
“ Whilst in the vale incessant silence reigns,
“ And Lamor's place the shaking people shun.” 185

“ Son of the times of old,” then Oscar said,
“ Sad is thy mournful tale! My pained soul,
“ Sighs for Hidallan. In his days of youth 190
“ Was his untimely fall! Light on the blast
“ He in the desert flies; and, far from home,
“ To his lone wand'ring in a foreign land.
“ Ye sons of echoing Morven! Near the foes
“ Of brave Fingál, assemblant now collect.
“ Dismiss the night amidst the dulcet song,
“ And all the strength of Caros cautious watch:
“ For to the chiefs who liv'd in other times
“ To silent Ardven's light and airy shades;
“ Where dimly sit his fathers in their clouds, 200
“ And view the future battles; Oscar goes.
“ And, like a half-extinguish'd meteor, there,
“ Hidallan, see I thee? Amidst thy woe,
“ O roaring Balva's chief, my sight approach!
Onward with songs the heroes move, and slow 205
Advances Oscar up the rising steep.
Before him, o'er the silent, shaded heath,
The nightly meteor in gradation set.
Faint, at a distance, rolls a rapid stream,
Whilst through the aged oaks, with sudden gusts, 210
Unfrequent rush the blasts. Behind her hill,

The half-enlighten'd moon, sinks dim and red.
 Weak voices on the heath are faintly heard,
 And his bright sabre fearless Oscar drew.

‘ Ghosts of my fathers! Come!’ The hero said. 215
 ‘ Ye, that, before, with th’ emp’rors of the world
 ‘ In combat fought! The deeds of future times
 ‘ And your discourses in your secret caves,
 ‘ When ye converse together and your sons
 ‘ See, on th’ embattled plain; to me foretel.’ 220

Straight at the summons of his mighty son,
 Came Trenmor from his hill. His airy limbs
 A cloud, resemblant of the stranger’s steed,
 Supportant him upheld. His shady robe
 Of Lano’s mist, that with pestif’rous course 225
 Bring to the people gen’ral death, was made.
 His sword, a meteor half extinguish’d form’d:—
 And his void face is without form and dark.
 Thrice o’er the hero heavily he sigh’d,
 And thrice the winds of night loud roar’d around. 230
 To Oscar many were his frequent words;
 But to our ears by halves, they only came,
 Mysterious as the tales of other times,
 Before the splendour of the song arose.
 Like mist, that melts upon the sunny hill, 235
 Slowly he vanish’d.—Then, first was the time,
 O Toscar’s daughter, when my son grew sad.
 Th’ approaching fall of his illustrious race
 Beforehand he beheld.—Thoughtful and dark,
 At intervals in silence he was seen. 240
 So fades, at times, the sun; when, on his face,
 A cloud he carries, but, e’er long, again
 On Cona’s hills he darts his beaming rays.

Oscar the gloomy season of the night
 Among his fathers pass'd.—On Carun's banks 245
 Him morning met grey-dawning on the hills
 Around a tomb, which in the times of old
 Was rais'd, appear'd a circumambient vale
 Of aspect vernal. Little hills their heads
 Lift at a distance; and their branchy trees
 Of antique growth, stretch waving in the gale.
 The warlike force of Caros [for by night
 They o'er the stream had cross'd] were seated *there*
 To the pale light of the new rising morn,
 Like trunks of aged pines, their hosts appear'd. 255
 Close by this tomb the fearless Oscar stood,
 And dreadful thrice then rais'd his thund'ring voice.
 The rocking hills loud echo'd all around;
 And bounding ran the starting roes away.
 With shriekings also on their sailing clouds, 260
 The trembling ghosts of the deceased fled.
 Such was the consternation, at the sound
 Of my son's voice; when he his friends conven'd.

A thousand spears, at once, rose glitt'ring round—
 The host of Caros rose:—But why that tear? 265
 Say, Toscar's daughter, why? My noble son
 Is brave, though still alone. As in the sky
 Darts forth the beam, my Oscar brightly shines.
 Around he turns—and down the people fall!
 His hand is like a spirit's deathly arm, 270
 When from a cloud with stretching force he bends,
 And viewless keeps the rest of his thin form;
 Yet in the vale the falling people die!
 Fearless my son th' approaching foe beheld;
 And, in the silent darkness of his strength, 275
 Manful he stood, and thus aloud exclaim'd:
 'Am I alone, amidst a thousand foes!

‘ *There*, many a spear with barbed point is seen !
 ‘ And many a darkly-rolling eye appears !
 ‘ Shall I to Ardvea fly ? Hold—let me ask,280
 ‘ Did e'er my Father's fly ? Their fatal arm
 ‘ Its mark did in a thousand battles leave !
 ‘ And Oscar also will renown require.
 ‘ Come then, my Father's dimly ghosts, and see
 ‘ My deeds in war !—'Tis true, I chance may fall :285
 ‘ Yet still—like echoing Merven's martial race,
 ‘ Unfading fame my feats in war shall crown.’
 As wells a boar peet in a narrow vale
 While in his place dilated still he stood !
 The battle came—but (*heaps on heaps*) they fell,290
 And Oscar's sword reek'd with the purple blood.

At Crona's flood, the noise his people reach'd ;
 And, like a hundred streams, they sounding came.
 Away the martial chiefs of Caros fled ;
 And, like a rock left by the ebbing sea,295
 Oscar unmov'd and stately still remain'd.

Now dark and deep, with all his foaming steeds,
 Caros his might in sadness roll'd along.

The little streams, amidst his course are lost,
 And, with the strife, the earth is rocking round.300
 With rage from wing to wing the battle spreads !
 At once, ten thousand swords gleam in the sky !—
 But why should Ossian still of battles sing ?
 For never shall my steel more shine in war.

Perceptive of the weakness of my arm305
 My days of youth to mind with grief recur.
 Happy are they, that fell in strength of youth,
 Bright in the flower of their meridian fame !
 They the lone tombs of their once dearest friends
 Have not beheld, nor fail'd to bend the bow310

Of strength mature. Amidst thy rushing blast,
O Oscar, happy is thy youthful day!
Oit' to thy fields of fame, where Caros fled
From thy uplifted sabre, is thy way.
Fair daughter of Toscar ! Darkness with its gloom 315
Steals repant on my soul, nor do I more
The figure of my son at Carun's streams,
Nor Oscar's form on murmur'ring Crona see.
Far hence the rustling winds have him convey'd,
And o'er his father's bosom sadness low'rs ! 320

But me, Malvina, to my sounding groves
And my loud roaring mountain-streams conduct.
To bring the days of other years to mind,
Let the loud chace on Cona meet my ear.
But bring, O maid, the lyre of dulcet sound, 325
That, when the brightness of my soul shall rise,
Amusant I may touch the trembling string.
Be thou too near, to learn the rising song,
And Ossian's name in future times shall sound.

The sons of weakness, in the times to come,
Will lift the voice on Cona ; and with eyes
Rais'd to the rocks, will say : ' Here Ossian dwelt.'
The chiefs of old the race that are no more
(While on our clouds, the wings of roaring winds,
We, O Malvina, ride) ; they shall admire. 330
Borne on the gales, above the desert rock
Our voices shall, at times, be heard in song.

The War of Inis-thona :

A POEM.

ARGUMENT.

THIS poem is an episode, introduced in a great work composed by Ossian, in which the actions of his friends, and his beloved son Oscar, were interwoven. The work itself is lost, but some episodes, and the story of the poem, are handed down by tradition. Inis-thona was an island of Scandinavia, subject to its own king, but depending upon the kingdom of Lochlin.

LIKE the short vision of the transient dream,
Which on the dark-brown hill of shady heath
The hunter thinks he sees, our time of youth
Soon glides away.—In mildest beams of sun
He sleeps; but shortly wakes amidst a storm.
Red round him flies the lightning: and the trees
Their troubled heads shake dusky in the wind:
Back, with delight upon the sunny day,
And on the pleasing visions of his rest,
With eager wishes for the past, he looks! 10

When shall the youth of Ossian, with new shoots,
Verdant return?—Or, in the sound of arms
His ravish'd ear delight?—When, in my steel,
Shall I, like Oscar, make my path to shine?
Come, with your streams, ye hills of Cona, come; 15
And give attentive ear to Ossian's voice!
Bright as the sun, clear-shining from the east,
Is rising, in my soul, the tuneful song;

And, quite absorb'd in prospects of the past,
The joys of other times my heart perceives. 20
Distinct, O Selma ! I behold thy tow'rs,
And the dusk oaks extending o'er thy wall.
Thy murm'ring streams are sounding in my ear ;
And crowding heroes stand in circles round.
Supported by great Trenmor's bossy shield,
(His spear against the moss-grown wall reclin'd)
To the soft accents of the warbling bards
Attent, Fingál is seated in the midst.
The warlike feats of his victorious arm,
And the king's deeds in his fam'd youth are heard. 30

Returned from the labours of the chase,
The hero's praise enraptur'd Oscar heard.
The shield of Branno from the tow'ring wall,
He took, and tears brim started in his eyes.
Red was his cheek of youth ; and low his voice
Of accent tremulous. Bright within his hand
Its head my jav'lin shook whilst he his voice
To Morven's king, 'midst warm sensations, spoke. 35

‘ Fingál ! of heroes thou the royal chief !
‘ Ossian, the next to him in warlike fame ! 40
‘ In youth's meridian ye the battle fought,
‘ And bright renown hath crown'd your names in song.
‘ Oscar is transient as high Cona's mist ;
‘ I just appear—then vanish quick away ;
‘ Nor will the bard my name discern in song,
‘ Nor will the hunter on the dark-brown heath
‘ My tomb enquire. Ye heroes of renown,
‘ In Inis-thona's battles let me fight.
‘ Far distant is the nation of my war !
‘ And Oscar's fall your ears shall never reach. 50
‘ In future time some bard may find me there,

‘ And to the song, perchance, entrust my name.
 ‘ The stranger’s daughter shall my tomb behold,
 ‘ And o’er the lonely youth, that came from far,
 ‘ In silence weep. The bard, too, at the feast 55
 ‘ Shall say : “ Now give attention to the song—
 ‘ The song of Oscar from the distant land.”

‘ Oscar,’ reply’d the glad Morvenian king,
 ‘ Son of my fame, most surely thou shalt fight.
 ‘ To Inis-thona my undaunted chief, 60
 ‘ To carry, my dark-bosom’d ship prepare.
 ‘ Son of my son, our ancient fame regard ;
 ‘ For thou art risen from a honour’d race !
 ‘ The strangers’ children suffer not to say :
 ‘ Weak are the son’s of Morven !” But, my son, 65
 ‘ Be thou, in battle, like the roaring storm ;
 ‘ And mild, in peace, as gleams the ev’ning sun.
 ‘ My Oscar, say to Inis-thona’s king :
 ‘ Fingál his youthful arm remembers still :
 ‘ When in the lovely Agandecca’s days, 70
 ‘ In fiercest combat we together strove.”

They lifted up, in haste, the sounding sail.
 And through the thongs of their high-tow’ring masts
 Loud blew the whistling wind. The oozy rocks
 Waves lash’d, and all the strength of ocean roar’d. 75
 The land of groves my son saw, through the wave :
 Soon into Runa’s echoing bay he rush’d,
 And sent his sword to Annir, king of spears.
 Up rose the grey-hair’d hero at the sight,
 When he the sabre of Fingál beheld. 80
 With eyes full swimming with the briny tear
 The battles of their youth he call’d to mind.
 Before the lovely Agandecca twice
 Had they in combat rais’d the glitt’ring spear :

Far at a distance heroes trembling stood, 85
 As if two ghosts in angry strife had met !

‘ But, now,’ begun the king : ‘ I’m weak with age,
 ‘ And useless lies the sword within my hall !
 ‘ Thou art of Morven’s race ! And in the strife
 ‘ Of glitt’ring spears has Annir also been : 90
 ‘ But now, like Lano’s storm-struck, faded oak,
 ‘ I have no son to welcome thy approach,
 ‘ Or, thee to carry to his father’s halls.
 ‘ Pale in the dust intombed Argon lies,
 ‘ And Ruro is no more ! Within the hall 95
 ‘ Of strangers is my daughter ;—and my tomb
 ‘ She longs to see.—Ten thousand glitt’ring spears
 ‘ Shakes her strange spouse, and, like a cloud of death,
 ‘ From Lano comes. O echoing Morven’s son,
 ‘ Thee here I welcome ;—Annir’s feast partake !’ 100

Three days successive they kept up the feast,
 And on the fourth grey Annir’s ear of age
 The name of Oscar reach’d.—They in the shell
 Festive rejoic’d ; and Runa’s boars pursu’d. 105
 Near to the boiling fount of mossy stones
 Their weary limbs the noble heroes rest.
 Down stole from Annir’s eyes the gushing tear ;
 And from his breast forth broke the rising sigh :
 ‘ Here darkly rest,’ the weeping hero said, 110
 ‘ The children of my youth. This mossy stone
 ‘ Is Ruro’s tomb : that tree of rustling leaf,
 ‘ Sounds o’er the tomb of Argon.—O my sons,
 ‘ Within your narrow house, hear ye my voice ?
 ‘ Or, when the breezes of the desert rise, 115
 ‘ Speak ye amidst these rustling leaves to me ?’

‘ Say—king of Inis-thona’, Oscar said,
 ‘ How fell the sons of youth ? Oft’ o’er their tombs
 ‘ The wild boar rushes, but the hunters’ rest
 ‘ His feet disturb not. Lightly they pursue 120
 ‘ The cloud-form’d deer, and bend their airy bow.
 ‘ The fav’rite pastime of their once stout youth
 ‘ Even yet they love, and mount the wind with joy.’

‘ Cormálo,’ then the king in answer said,
 ‘ Ten thousand spears commands.—With look of war, 125
 ‘ He at dark-rolling Lano’s waters dwells ;
 ‘ Whence rising spreads the gloomy cloud of death.
 ‘ To Runa’s echoing halls he came, and sought
 ‘ The honour of the spear. The noble youth
 ‘ Was lovely, as beams the rising sun of morn ! 130
 ‘ And few were they, that him in fight could meet !
 ‘ My heroes yielded to Cormálo’s arm :
 ‘ And Lano’s son my daughter’s favour won.
 ‘ ‘Midst falling tears of pride, back from the chase
 ‘ Argon and Ruro came. Their silent eyes 135
 ‘ With grief on Runa’s heroes sad they roll’d,
 ‘ Because they to a stranger gave the day.
 ‘ Three days they with Cormálo festive spent,
 ‘ And on the fourth my valiant Argon fought.—
 ‘ But who in combat could with Argon strive ? 140
 ‘ Beneath his arm the chief of Lano sunk.
 ‘ Dark swell’d his bosom with the grief of pride,
 ‘ And to behold the death of both my sons,
 ‘ In secret he resolv’d.—To Runa’s hills
 ‘ They went—and there the dark-brown hinds pursu’d. 145
 ‘ The secret arrow of Cormálo flew,
 ‘ And both my children fell ! To his lov’d maid—
 ‘ To Inis-thona’s dark-hair’d maid, he came.
 ‘ With utmost speed they o’er the desert fled,
 ‘ And Annir in lone solitude remain’d. 150

‘ The night approach’d—bright morning too appear’d—
 ‘ Yet neither Argon’s voice, nor Ruro’s, came.
 ‘ At length, howe’er, their fav’rite dog is seen,
 ‘ The fleet and bounding Runar.—To the hall
 ‘ He howling came, and tow’rds their fatal place 155
 ‘ Still seem’d to look, and we his course pursu’d—
 ‘ Fall’n in this very place my sons we found,
 ‘ And by this mossy stream we them interr’d.
 ‘ This is the haunt of Annir, when the chase
 ‘ Of the fleet hinds is over.—Ike the trunk 160
 ‘ Of some bare oak of years, above their place
 ‘ I bend; and from me tears incessant flow.’

‘ Ronnan !’ the rising wrath of Oscar said,
 ‘ King Ogar, of the spears ! My heroes call—
 ‘ (The sons of streamy Morven) to my side. 165
 ‘ To-day to Lano’s water, whence arise
 ‘ The noxious clouds of death, our way we speed
 ‘ Short is the season of Cormálo’s joy ;
 ‘ Death at the point of our bright swords oft’ hangs.’

Like stormy clouds when o’er the dark’ning heath, 170
 Before the torrent of dusk-winds, they roll :
 (Their edges are with forked lightning ting’d,
 And the near storm the echoing groves foresee) :
 With dreadful speed, they o’er the desert came.
 The horn of Oscar’s battle soon was heard, 175
 And ‘midst its trembling waves all Lano shook !
 Around Cormálo’s bossed, sounding shield,
 Direct the children of the lake conven’d.
 Then Oscar, as in battle he was wont,
 With all his prowess fought. Beneath his sword 180
 Cormálo fell : and to their secret vales
 Th’ affrighted sons of dismal Lano fled.
 Then Inis-thona’s widowed daughter back

To Annir's sounding halls brave Oscar brought,
 Again, the face of age was bright with joy,
 And, in his soul, he blest the king of swords.

185

How great was Ossian's pleasure when the sails
 Of his brave son, yet distant, he beheld !

'Twas like a cloud bright-rising in the east,
 When, lonely wand'ring in a land unknown,
 The trav'ller sadly lours ; and dismal night,
 With all her ghosts, around him thickly pours.
 Him, with the plaudit of symphonious songs,
 To Selma's halls we brought. The feast of shells
 To be prepar'd, Fingál gave in command.

190

A thousand bards the name of Oscar rais'd,
 And Morven's groves gave echo to the noise.
 In charming mien there Toscar's daughter stood,
 With voice resemblant of the dulcet lyre,
 When, in calm evening, thro' the silent vale,
 Borne on the softness of the rustling breeze
 With zeph'r'rous sweetness comes the distant sound !

200

Ye, that enjoy the blessings of the light,
 Upon my hills beneath some shady rock

O lay my weary limbs. Around the place
 Let the thick hazles stand. And also, let
 The rustling oak of spreading boughs be near.
 Green be my resting place, and let the sound
 Of distant torrents sweetly lull my ear.

205

Daughter of Toscar, take the well-strung lyre
 And raise thy voice in Selma's lovely song :
 That hast'ning sleep, amidst the growing joy.
 My soul may overtake :—that to my mind
 The dreams of my past youth may sweet return,
 Together with the days of great Fingál.—
 Selma ! thy tow'rs, thy trees, and shaded wall,

210

215

Full-rising I behold. The heroes too
 Of Morven I perceive ; and ravish'd hear
 The bards of choral song. Cormálo's sword
 Whilst the brave Oscar lifts amidst the crowd, 220
 Its studded thongs a thousand youths admire.
 Struck with amazement at his potent arm,
 With wonder on my son they eager look !
 The joy of his glad father's eyes they mark ;—
 They long to equal him in martial fame. 225
 And your due fame, O streamy Morven's sons,
 Ye shall receive. Oft' bright'ned with the song
 My rising spirit beams ; and of my youth
 Th' associates I remember. But soft sleep
 Down with the lyral dulcet-tremblings comes, 230
 And dreams approach with sweet inceptive growth.
 Far distant stand, sons of the noisy chase,
 Nor my calm rest disturb. The hoary bard
 Of other times, with his forefather's forms
 (Chiefs of the days of old), close converse holds. 235
 Sons of the busy chase, far distant stand,
 Nor interrupt the dreams of Ossian's rest.

END OF THE WAR OF INIS-THONA.

The Battle of Lora:

A POEM.

ARGUMENT.

FIGAL, on his return from Ireland, after he had expelled Swaran from that kingdom, made a feast to all his heroes: he forgot to invite Ma-ionnau and Aldo, two chiefs, who had not been along with him on his expedition.—They resented his neglect; and went over to Erragon, king of Sora, a country of Scandinavia, the declared enemy of Fingal. The valour of Aldo soon gained him a great reputation in Sora; and Lorma, the beautiful wife of Erragon fell in love with him. He found means to escape with her, and to come to Fingal, who resided then in Selma on the western coast. Erragon invaded Scotland, and was slain in battle by Gau the son of Morni, after he had rejected terms of peace offered him by Fingal. In this war Aldo fell in a single combat, by the hands of his rival Erragon; and the unfortunate Lorma afterwards died of grief.

SON of the distant land, that in the cell
In secret dwellest! Say—what meets my ear ?
Hear I the murmurings of thy sounding groves ?
Or breeze-borne come the accents of thy songs ?
Tho' loud the torrent sounded in my ear, 5
A tuneful voice I heard. Say—in thy song,
The chiefs now resonant in thy native land,
Or, ghosts abiding in the fleeting gale,
Dost thou extol ? But, o'er that heathy plain
(Thou lonely dweller of the silent rocks!) 10
Cast now thy eyes.—With their rank whistling grass,
And with their grizled stones of mossy heads,
Green tombs thou se'st, son of the lonely rock !
Them thou behold'st ; but Ossian's eyes have fail'd.

Down roaring comes a rapid mountain-stream 15
 And sends its waters round a verdant hill :
 Upon the airy top four mossy stones,
 'Midst tufts of wither'd grass, up-rear their heads.
 Two trees, down bent by boist'rous, wintry storms,
 With wide and whistling branches spread around. 20
 This is thy dwelling Erragon!—*this*, thy house,
 Thy narrow house!—Thy noisy festive shells
 In Sora's mansions, long have been forgot ;
 And, in thy hall, dark is thy shield become.
 O Erragon great ! Thou king of bounding ships ! 25
 Thou chief of distant Sora ! On our hills
 How hast thou fall'n ! How is the mighty low !
 Son of the secret cell ! Delightest thou
 In dirgeful songs ? Then Lora's battle hear.
 The clangor of its steel, long since is past. 30
 So murmur'ring thunder on the darken'd hill
 Roars for a time—and then is heard no more.
 With silent beams the bursting sun returns :
 The glitt'ring rocks reflect the welcome rays,
 And with green heads the grateful mountains smile. 35

Our bounding ships, from Ullin's rolling waves
 The winding bay of Cona safe receiv'd ;
 Whilst our white sheets hung loosely to the masts,
 And boist'rous roar'd the winds through Morven's groves,
 The royal horn is sounded, and the deer 40
 Start from the coverts of the shady rocks.
 Straight, in the woods our winged arrows flew,
 And, soon, awide the mountain feast is spread.
 For dreadful Swaran's fall (that monster dire)
 Upon our rocks great was our festive joy. 45
 Two heroes were forgotten at our feast ;
 And hot with rage their angry bosoms burn'd.
 Darkly their livid eyes in secret roll'd,

And from their breasts forth burst the sigh of grief.

In converse they together are observ'd,

50

Casting their spears, in anger, on the ground.

Amidst our joy they were two shady clouds,

Like misty pillars on the settled sea.

It gleams responsive to the solar beam,

Yet still the mariners a storm foresee.

55

‘ Raise my white sails,’ aloud Ma-ronnan cry'd :—

‘ Them to the western gales wide spreading *raise*.

‘ Through the white-foaming, swelling northern wave

‘ O Aldo, let us rush. For at the feast

‘ We are forgot ; yet, red with reeking blood

60

‘ Our arms have been. The mountains of Fingál

‘ Let us abandon, and hereafter serve

‘ The king of Sora. For, his face is fierce,

‘ And dusky grows around his spear the war.

‘ For fame, O Aldo, in the heat of strife

65

‘ In echoing Sora's battles let us seek.’

Arm'd with their barbed swords and shield's of thongs,

In haste to Lumar's winding bay they rush'd.

To Sora's haughty king, of bounding steeds

The chief, they came. Back from the sounding chase

70

Had Erragon come :—his spear was red in blood.

Dark to the ground he bent his swarthy face,

And whistled, as he went. Without delay

He to his feasts the wecome strangers took ;

Who fought and conquer'd in his roaring wars.

75

Bright with his fame to Sora's lofty walls

Back Aldo came : when from her private tow'r

The spouse of Erragon, beauteous Lorma look'd

With humid, rolling eyes.—Her dark-brown hair

Wild on the wind of ocean flies. Her breast,

80

Like flaky snow light scattered on the heath—
(When, with soft breath, the gentle winds arise
And slowly move it in the falling light),
With gentlest heavings rises white and full.

Bright as the beam of Sora's setting sun 85

Young Aldo she beheld. With heaving sighs
Arose her feeling heart: the starting tears
Stood in her brimful eyes, and in her grief
On her white arm her drooping head she lean'd.

The grief concealing with apparent joy, 90

Three days within the stately hall she sat.

Upon the fourth, along the rolling sea
She with the hero took a speedy flight.
To Cona's tow'rs, the palace of Fingál,
The potent king of glitt'ring spears; they came. 95

‘ O thoughtless Aldo of the heart of pride !’

In rising wrath, the king of Morven said:

‘ Shall I protect thee from the justest wrath

‘ Of Sora's injur'd king? Since Sora's fair

‘ Has been by Aldo of the little soul, 100

‘ Away convey'd: henceforth, who in their halls,

‘ Will now my people venture to receive,

‘ Or give the feast of strangers? Feeble hand,

‘ Go to thy hills—and hide thee in thy caves:

‘ For mournful is the battle we must fight

105

‘ With Sora's gloomy king of 'vengeful wrath!

‘ O noble Trenmor's ghost! when shall Fingál

‘ From battle cease? Amidst the strife of war

‘ I first drew breath, and in dire paths of blood

‘ Down to the grave must be my dreary way!

110

‘ Yet, never did my hand the feeble hurt,

‘ Nor did my steel come near the weak in arms.

‘ Thy gath'ring tempests, that e'er long my halls

‘ Will overturn, O Morven, I behold:

- ‘ When fall’n in war my children dead shall lie
- ‘ And none remain in Selma’s halls to dwell :
- ‘ Then, will the feeble sons of weakness come,
- ‘ My silent tomb unable to discern.
- ‘ But my renown shall flourish in the song,
- ‘ And like the shadowy visions of a dream,
- ‘ My deeds in war to future times shall be.’

115

‘Round Erragon straight (as round a ghost of night,
 The storms collect, when he from Morven’s top
 Them summons, and upon the stranger’s land
 Prepares to pour them), all his forces crowd.—

125

To Cona’s shore he came ; and to the king
 Dismiss’d his bard, in challenge to demand
 The fight of thousands, or, the land of hills.

Encircled by th’ associates of his youth

Fingál sat in his hall ; whilst distant far

130

The younger heroes in the desert wastes

The chase pursu’d. The grey-hair’d chiefs discours’d
 Of other times, and actions of their youth ;

When aged Narthmor, streamy Lora’s king,

Th’ approach of Erragon, loud, announcing came.

135

‘ The songs of other years,’ begun the chief,

‘ This is no time to hear :—upon the coast

‘ Dark Erragon frowns and lifts ten thousand swords.

‘ Among his chiefs a gloom pervades the king,

‘ His countenance is like the darken’d moon,

140

‘ Amidst the meteor’s blaze in time of night !’

‘ Come from thy hall,’ said the Morvenian chief,

‘ Thou daughter of my love : Bosmina, come,

‘ Thou maid of streamy Morven, from thy hall !

‘ The stranger’s steeds in haste, O Narthmor, take,

145

‘ And on the daughter of Fingál attend.

- ‘ Here, to our feast—to Selma’s shaded wall,
- ‘ Let her the king of distant Sora bid.
- ‘ Propose to him, Bosmina, open peace—
- ‘ The peace of heroes, and th’ extensive wealth 150
- ‘ Of gen’rous Aldo : for, far distant stand
- ‘ Our youths, and age is on our trembling hands.

Bright as a beam of light comes to a cloud
 To Erragon’s host she came ! In her right hand
 ‘ An arrow of gold she held, and in her left 155
 A sparkling shell, the sign of Morven’s peace.
 As gleams a rock before the sunny beams
 Forth sudden issuing from a broken cloud
 Divided by the bluster of the gale ;
 So bright’ning Erragon in her presence shone. 160

- ‘ Son of the distant Sora,’ then begun
 The mildly blushing maid: ‘ Come to the feast
 ‘ Of Morven’s king—to Selma’s shaded walls.
- ‘ The peace of heroes also, warrior, take ;
 ‘ And let the sword rest darkly by thy side. 165
 ‘ And, if the wealth of kings should be thy choice,
 ‘ To gen’rous Aldo’s words attention pay.
- ‘ As terms of peace, to Erragon he gives
 ‘ An hundred steeds, the children of the rein ;
 ‘ An hundred virgins too, from distant lands ; 170
 ‘ Likewise, an hundred hawks with flutt’ring wing,
 ‘ That fly across the sky, An hundred zones,
 ‘ Friends of the births of heroes, and the cure
 ‘ Of every son of toil ;—these sacred zones,
 ‘ To bind high-breasted women, shall be thine. 175
 ‘ Ten sheils bestudded with bright-glitt’ring gems
 ‘ In Sora’s tow’rs shall shine ; upon their stars
 ‘ Blue trembling waters seem like sparkling wine,
 ‘ Amidst the echo of their sounding halls

- ‘ They gladden’d once the emp’rors of the world. 180
- ‘ Ready, O warlike hero, at thy choice,
- ‘ These thine shall be, or thy white bosom’d spouse.
- ‘ Tho’ gen’rous Aldo by Fingál be lov’d.—
- ‘ (Fingál! Who, though endow’d with strength of arm,
- ‘ A hero never wrong’d) : within thy halls, 185
- ‘ Her pearly eyes, again, shall Lorma roll!.’

- ‘ Soft voice of Cona !’ then reply’d the king,
- ‘ Acquaint him, that he spreads the feast in vain.
- ‘ Around me let Fingál submissive place
- ‘ His num’rous spoils, and bend beneath my pow’r. 190
- ‘ The swords of his forefathers, and the shields
- ‘ Of other times let him yield up to me :
- ‘ That them my children in my halls may view
- ‘ And say “ These are the arms of fam’d Fingál.”

- ‘ Never shall they,’ the virgin’s rising pride 195
- Rejoin’d, ‘ them in thy stately halls behold.
- ‘ They in the mighty hands of heroes lie,
- ‘ In war ne’er wont to yield. Upon our hills
- ‘ O echoing Sora’s king ! the tempest grows.
- ‘ Son of the distant land, thy people’s fall 200
- ‘ E’en now already dost thou not foresee ?

- Then back to Selma’s silent halls she came,
And, when her eyes down-cast, the king beheld ;
He from his place, in his great strength, arose
And shook his aged locks, and straightway took 205
The sounding mail of Trenmor, and the shield,
The dark-brown shield, which his forefather’s wore.
When to his spear he stretch’d his royal hand,
All Selma’s hall with low’ring darkness teem’d.
Perceptive of the people’s speedy death 210
The ghosts of thousands made their near approach.

With thoughts full-bent on deeds of other years,
And on the fame survivant of the tomb,
In every hero's aged face delight
Rose dreadful, and to meet the foe they rush'd.

215

At Trathal's tomb the bounding dogs of chase
Were now discern'd, and that not far behind
His younger heroes came, Fingál perceiv'd
And stopt amidst his course. Brave Oscar first—
Then Morní's son, and Verní's race appear'd. 220
The dark'ning Fercuth shew'd his gloomy form:
And, on the wind, spread Dermid his dark hair,
And Ossian came the last. I humm'd the song
Of other times.—Across the little streams
My steps, my spear supported; and my thoughts 225
On deeds of mighty men were fully bent.
His bossy shield Fingál, the hoary chief,
Then struck, and gave the dismal sign of war:
And brightly-glitt'ring on the waving heath
A thousand swords, at once unsheathed, gleam. 230
Three grey-hair'd sons of song the mournful voice
With tuneful accent, raise.—With sounding steps
Darkly and deep, a gloomy ridge, along
We rush in semblance like a stormy show'r,
That pours in torrents on the narrow vale. 235

High on his hill the king of Morven sat:
With alant motion on the zephyr flew
The solar-beam of war: and, near at hand,
With all their waving locks of hoary age,
Th' associates of his youthful days appear. 240
When in the war his sons the hero saw—
When them amidst the lightning of the swords
He saw; and mindful of their father's deeds,
Through his glad eyes bright beam'd the rising joy.

As roars a winter-stream ; in all its strength
 Erragon forth advanc'd. Where'er he goes,
 The battle falls, and death is at his side.

215

‘ Who,’ said Fingál, ‘ like the swift-bounding roe,
 ‘ Like echoing Cona’s hart, in swiftness comes ?
 ‘ His sounding shield is glitt’ring by his side, 250
 ‘ And of his armour mournful is the clang !
 ‘ In flaming strife with Erragon dark he meets !
 ‘ Behold the roaring battle of the chiefs !
 ‘ So two fierce ghosts amidst a gloomy storm,
 ‘ With lightning arm’d, in dire contention meet. 255
 ‘ But fallest thou, son of the airy hill,
 ‘ And is thy snow-white osom stain’d with blood ?
 ‘ Weep, hapless Lorma !—Aldo is no more !

The spear of his great strength, then took the king.
 (For Aldo’s fall had touch’d the royal heart.) 260
 And on the foe he bent his deathful eyes :
 But Gaul, just then, the king of Sora met.
 Who can relate the battle of the chiefs ?
 Let this suffice, *The mighty stranger fell !*

‘ Ye sons of Cona !’ cry’d Fingál aloud : 265
 ‘ Now stop the hand of dreadful-stalking death.
 ‘ Mighty was he, that now so low is laid,
 ‘ And much in Sora is his death bewail’d !
 ‘ The stranger tow’rds his stately hall will come,
 ‘ And wonder at the voiceless silence there ! 270
 ‘ Stranger ! the king is fall’n, and from his house
 ‘ The joy has ceas’d.—Yet, to his woodland-sound
 ‘ Attention give—perhaps his ghost is there ;
 ‘ But he far distant lies on Morven’s hills,
 ‘ Beneath the sabre of a foreign foe.’ 275

Such were the words of the Morvenian chief,
 When in calm strains high rais'd the tuneful bard
 The song of peace ; and our uplifted swords,
 Direct, we stopp'd, and spur'd the feeble foe.
 Then, in that tomb full'n Erragon's corpse we laid, 280
 And, in sad dirge, the voice of grief I rais'd ;
 Whilst the dusk clouds of night came rolling down,
 And Erragon's shady ghost by some was seen.
 Cloudy and dark his bloodless face appear'd,
 And, in his breast, half-formed rose the sigh, 285
 O king of Sora, blessed be thy soul !
 Strong was thy arm and terrible in war !

In Aldo's hall, where beam'd a flaming oak,
 Fair Lorna sat amidst the shining gleam.
 With sadd'ning gloom down came the shades of night 290
 But he did not return ! Then, Lorna's soul,
 Struck with shagreen, with growing sadness lour'd.
 ' Hunter of Cona, what can thee detain ?
 ' For thou,' she said, ' didst promise to return.
 ' Has the swift deer her flight far distant made ? 295
 ' Or, do the winds, around thee on the heath,
 ' With dusky currents sigh ? Where is my friend ?
 ' For in the land of strangers I abide !
 ' But, dearest Aldo, from thy echoing hills,
 ' My best beloved, hasten thy return !' 300

Attentive list'ning to the rustling blast,
 Still tow'rds the gate her watchful eyes are turn'd.
 Still thinking it to be her Aldo's head, -
 Returning joy beams orient on her face :
 Yet with faint shade, returning sorrow comes 305
 Like a thin cloud faint-glooming on the moon.
 ' And wilt thy not return, my love ?' she said.
 ' Let me the surface of the hill behold !

‘ With lucid gleam the moon beams in the east,
 ‘ And bright the unruffled surface of the lake
 ‘ Is glimm’ring seen ! Ah ! when shall I discern
 ‘ His bounding dogs returning from the chase ?
 ‘ When, loud and distant on the floating gile,
 ‘ His breeze-born voice *shall I with rapture hear ?*
 ‘ Without delay from thy loud echoing hills,
 ‘ Hunter of woody Cona, speed thy way !

310

315

Thin on a rock as beams the wat’ry moon,
 Forth issuing from between two parting clouds,
 Whilst on the field in rapid torrents fall
 The midnight show’r : his shady ghost appear’d.
 Persuaded that her hero was no more,
 She, o’er the heath, the empty form pursu’d,
 Mournful as sounds the murmur of the breeze,
 When on the herbage of the cave it sighs,
 I heard her cries approaching on the wind.

320

325

She came—she found her hero : but her voice
 No more was heard ! Her melancholy eyes
 She roll’d in silence. Like a wat’ry cloud
 Forth, to the moon-beam, rising from the lake,
 To paleness was her blooming visage turn’d.
 Few were her days on Cona, and c’er long
 Into the tomb she sunk : Fingál his bards
 Commanded ; and o’er Lorma’s death they sung.
 For *one whole day*, in each revolving year,
 When autumn bleak returns with dusky gales,
 Her death the maids of Morven sadly mourn.

330

335

Son of the distant land ! thou thy abode
 Mak’st in the field of fame. O let thy song,
 In praise of those that fell, at times, arise :
 That their thin ghosts around thee may rejoice,

340

And (when thou liest down in calm repose,
And into thy lone cave bright looks the moon)
The soul of Lorma, on a moon-beam come.
Then shàit thou on her lovely features look,
But, on her cheek, still stands the pearly tear.

345

END OF THE BATTLE OF LORA.

Carthon :

A POEM.

ARGUMENT.

THIS poem is complete; and the subject of it, as of most of Ossian's compositions, tragical. In the time of Comhal, the son of Trathal, and father of the celebrated Fingal, Clessamor the son of Thaedu and brother of Moina, Fingal's mother, was driven by a storm into the river Clyde, on the banks of which stood Balclutha, a town belonging to the Britons between the walls. He was hospitably received by Reuthamir, the principal man in the place, who gave him Moina, his only daughter in marriage. Reuda, the son of Cormo, a Briton, who was in love with Moina, came to Reuthamir's house, and behaved haughtily towards Clessamor. A quarrel ensued, in which Reuda was killed;—he Britons, who attended him, pressed so hard on Clessamor, that he was obliged to throw himself into the Clyde, and swim to his ship. He hoisted sail, and the wind being favourable, bore him out to sea. He often endeavoured to return, and carry off his beloved Moina by night; but the wind continuing contrary, he was forced to desist.

Moina, who had been left with child by her husband, brought forth a son, and died soon after. Reuthamir named the child Carthon, i.e. 'the murmur of waves,' from the storm which carried off Clessamor, his father, who was supposed to have been cast away. When Carthon was three years old, Comhal, father of Fingal, in one of his expeditions against the Britons, took and burnt Balclutha. Reuthamir was killed in the attack; and Carthon was carried safe away by his nurse, who fled farther into the country of the Britons. Carthon, coming to man's estate, was resolved to revenge the fall of Balclutha, on Comhal's posterity. He set sail from the Clyde, and, sailing to the coast of Morven, defeated two of Fingal's heroes, who came to oppose his progress. He was at last, unwittingly killed by his father Clessamor, in a single combat.

This story is the foundation of the present poem, which opens on the night preceding the death of Carthon; so that what passed before, is introduced by way of episode. The poem is addressed to Malvina, the daughter of Toscar.

A STORY of the times of old! The deeds
Of days of other years be now my song.

Back to my thoughts the mem'ry of the past
The murmur of thy streams, O Lora, brings.

And lovely, O Girmillar, in my ear 5
 Resounds the roaring of thy airy groves.
 A rock with its grey head of shady heath,
 Malvina, lovely maid, dost thou not see ?
 Three aged firs bend from its mossy face,
 And at its feet green is the narrow plain. 10

There, grows spontaneous the white mountain-flow'r,
 And shakes its head contending with the breeze.

There too, the thistle lonely hangs, and sheds
 Its aged beard. Half sunk within the ground
 Two stones their heads of moss shew, and the place 15
 The mountain-deer avoids ; for he beholds
 Its guardian ghost of visage wan and grey :
 For in the narrow plain beside the rock
 The mighty, O Malvina, silent lie.

A story of the times of old ! The deeds 20
 Of days of other years be now my song.

‘ Who from the land of strangers in his strength,
 ‘ Encircled by his valiant thousands, comes ?
 ‘ The radiant sun-beam pours its streaming light
 ‘ Before him, and his hair the mountain-wind 25
 ‘ Approaching greets. His face is from the war.
 ‘ Calm as the beam, that from the western cloud
 ‘ At ev'ning looks on Cona's silent vale,
 ‘ He now approaches.—Who, but Comhal's son,
 ‘ The king of mighty deeds ! His hills with joy 30
 ‘ He sees, and bids a thousand voices rise.
 ‘ Sons of the distant land along your fields
 ‘ You from our arms with rapid speed have fled.
 ‘ *The emp'ror of the world* sits in his hall
 ‘ And of his people's flight the news receives. 35
 ‘ Red hot with rage he rises up, and lifts
 ‘ His eye of pride, and takes his father's sword.

‘ Sons of the distant land, along your fields
 ‘ You from our arms with rapid speed have fled.’

So sung the bards, when they to Selma’s halls 40
 Victorious came. Amidst the crowd arose
 A thousand lights brought from the strangers’ land.
 Around the feast is furnish’d, and the night
 Was spent in joy. Then said fair-hair’d Fingál,
 ‘ Where now is Cléssammor of the noble deeds ? 45
 ‘ Where is th’ associate of my father, when
 ‘ My days of joy roll’d sweetly o’er my head ?—
 ‘ Sullen and dark in echoing Lora’s vale
 ‘ His days he spends—but, lo ! he now comes down !
 ‘ So in his strength the steed descends the hill ; 50
 ‘ His proud companions snuffing in the breeze,
 ‘ And his bright mane wide-tossing in the wind.
 ‘ Blest be the soul of Cléssammor of great deeds !
 ‘ Why stay so long from Selma’s festive halls ?’

‘ Returned is the chief amidst his fame ?’ 55
 Great Cléssammor said :—‘ Such was the high renown
 ‘ Of Comhal in the battles of his youth.
 ‘ O’er Carun often to the strangers’ land
 ‘ We pass’d together, and our glitt’ring swords
 ‘ Returned not unstain’d with purple blood :
 ‘ Nor did *the emp’rors of the world* rejoice. 60
 ‘ Why do I still the battles of my youth
 ‘ Remember, since my hair is mix’d with grey ?
 ‘ My hand forgets to bend the bow of strength,
 ‘ And now my age requires a lighter spear.
 ‘ O that (as when I first beheld the maid, 65
 ‘ White-handed daughter of the strangers’ land,
 ‘ The mildest Moina, with the dark-blue eyes :)
 ‘ My past, but pleasing joys would now return !’

‘ Tell,’ said Fingál the king of matchless might, 70
 ‘ The mournful story of thy youthful days.
 ‘ As some dark cloud o’erspreads the beaming sun,
 ‘ So sorrow shades great Cléssammor’s mighty soul.
 ‘ On roaring Lora’s banks thy lonely thoughts
 ‘ Abound with grief. The sorrow of thy youth 75
 ‘ And darkness of thy days give to our ears.’

Then in reply great Cléssammor thus began :

‘ Twas in the days of peace, that in my ship
 ‘ I at Balclutha’s walls of tow’rs arriv’d.
 ‘ The wind had roar’d behind my bending sails, 80
 ‘ And my dark-bosom’d vessel Clutha’s streams
 ‘ With their wide-swelling, winding bay receiv’d.
 ‘ Three days I in Reuthamir’s halls remain’d,
 ‘ And saw that beam of light, his daughter fair.
 ‘ Then went the festive shell of joy around, 85
 ‘ And the old hero gave the charming fair.
 ‘ Her breasts were like the foam upon the wave,
 ‘ Her eyes were sparkling as the stars of light,
 ‘ Her hair was jetty as the raven’s wing,
 ‘ And her great soul was gen’rous and serene. 90
 ‘ Great was my love for Moina (charming fair !)
 ‘ And my enraptur’d heart pour’d forth in joy.

‘ A stranger’s son arriv’d :—a mighty chief,
 ‘ Who also the white-bosom’d Moina lov’d.
 ‘ His words were mighty in the stately hall, 95
 ‘ And oft’ he half unsheathe’d his glitt’ring sword.
 ‘ Where is the mighty Comhal,’ ‘ loud he cry’d,’
 ‘ The restless wand’rer of the dusky heath ?
 ‘ Comes he to fam’d Balclutha with his host,
 ‘ Since Cléssammor’s great prowess swells so high !’ 100
 ‘ Warrior ! my soul,’ ‘ I in reply begun,’
 ‘ Burns in a light entirely of its own.

“ Though distant be the warriors of great fame,
 “ I in the midst of thousands dauntless stand.
 “ Thy words are mighty, stranger, and thy mein
 “ Might terror give ; for Cléssamnor is alone !
 “ Yet, know, my sword is trembling by my side,
 “ And longs to glitter in my fearless hand.—
 “ Of Comhal, son of Clutha, speak no more !”

105

“ The strength of his great pride arose. We fought : 110
 “ And prostrate soon beneath my sword he fell.
 “ His fall the banks of winding Clutha heard,
 “ When soon a thousand spears were flaming round !
 “ I fought ;—but, by the strangers' num'rous bands
 “ Borne down, I plunged into Clutha's stream. 115
 “ Above the waves my sails large-bending rose,
 “ And soon I bounded on the dark-blue sea.
 “ With red eyes rolling in a flood of tears,
 “ And raven-tresses floating on the wind,
 “ Directly to the shore fair Moina came ; 120
 “ And plain I heard her cries of grief and woe.
 “ To turn my bounding ship I often strove—
 “ But strove in vain. The eastern winds prevail'd.
 “ Nor have I Clutha of the winding streams
 “ Or dark-brown haired Moina since beheld. 125
 “ She on Balclutha fell : for her pale ghost
 “ I saw.—Her, as she through the dusky night
 “ Along the murmur'ring Lora came, I knew.
 “ She was, in semblance, like the crescent moon
 “ When dimly seen through shades of gather'd mist, 130
 “ Whilst the dim sky pours down its flaky snow,
 “ And dark and silent is the world beneath.”

“ The praise of hapless Moina,” said Fingál
 The chief of might, “ ye 'bards exalt in song.
 “ Call to our hills her ghost, with sweetest strains ; 135

- That she may peaceful rest with Morven's fair,
- Those radiant sun-beams of the days now past,
- The fav'rites once of heroes now no more.
- Balcutha's massy walls I have beheld—
- But they were desolate. For, the raging fire 140
- Had loud resounded in the lofty halls,
- And there the people's voice is heard no more.
- By the vast ruins of the broken walls
- The stream of Clutha from its place was driv'n.
- *There* its lone head the bearded thistle shook, 145
- And clumps of moss loud whistled to the wind.
- Out from the windows look'd the wary fox,
- And round his head rank wav'd the mural grass.
- Fair Moina's dwelling is a ruin made,
- And in her father's mansion silence reigns. 150
- Over the land of strangers, tuneful bards,
- In solemn strains lift up the mournful song.
- 'Tis only just before us they have fall'n,
- For *we in turn, one day, must also fall.*
- Son of the winged day, why dost thou build 155
- The hall, and look from thy proud tow'rs to-day ?
- Yet a few years, and lo ! the desert blast
- Shall howling sound within thy empty court,
- And loudly whistle round thy half-worn shield.—
- —And let the blast of the wild desert come— 160
- Still, in our day we shall obtain renown :
- *Still* shall the mark of my strong arm in war
- And my remember'd name be heard in song.
- Raise then the martial song, send round the shell ;
- And in my hall let festive joy be heard. 165
- When thou, O glorious sun of heav'n, shalt fail—
- If fail thou *shalt*, thou mighty fount of light ;
- If, like Fingál, thou for a season shine ;
- Our fame thy splendid brightness shall survive.'

So sung renown'd Fingal amidst his joy,
 And from their seats, to hear the royal voice,
 Forward his thousand bards attentive lean'd.
 He sung as sounds the music of the lyre,
 That trembling moves upon the vernal gale.
 Thy thoughts sublime were lovely, O Fingál !
 Why had not Ossian thy great strength of soul ?
 But thou, my father, standest quite alone,
 And who can equal Morven's matchless king ?

170

So pass'd away the night in dulcet song
 And growing morning now return'd in joy.
 Their heads of dusky grey the mountains shew'd,
 And the blue-shining face of ocean smil'd.
 The white wave tumbles round the distant rock
 And a grey mist slow rises from the lake.
 In semblance like an aged man, it came
 Along the silent plain. Nor did it move
 In steps its limbs gigantic, for a ghost
 Supported it slow-moving in mid air.
 Tow'rds Selma's hall it came with dark approach,
 And then dissolved in a show'r of blood.

180

185

190

The king alone beheld the awful sight,
 And he foresaw the people's speedy death.
 In deepest silence to his hall he came,
 And thoughtful took his father's massy spear.
 The pond'rous mail loud rattled on his breast,
 And, straight, his faithful heroes rose around.
 Observant of the eyes of Morven's chief,
 They silent one upon another look'd.
 They saw the battle in his redd'ning face—
 The death of armies on his spear.—At once
 A thousand shields upon their arms are plac'd ;
 A thousand polish'd swords at once they drew -

195

200

And Selma's hall around with brightness shone.
 The clang of arms ascends, and in their place
 The grey dogs howl.—Among the mighty chiefs 205
 No word is heard. Each mark'd the royal eyes
 Attent, and half-assum'd his heavy spear.

‘ Ye sons of Morven,’ then began the king,
 ‘ This is no time to feast and fill the shell.
 ‘ Near us the battle darkens, and sure death 210
 ‘ Now hovers o'er the land: and some kind ghost,
 ‘ Friend of Fingál, has warn'd us of the foe.
 ‘ From the dark-rolling sea the foes approach,
 ‘ —The stranger's sons. For, from the wat'ry plain
 ‘ The sign of Morven's gloomy danger came. 215
 ‘ Let each assume his spear of pond'rous weight,
 ‘ And gird the sabre of his father on.
 ‘ On ev'ry head let the dark helmet rise,
 ‘ And let the mail with all his lightning pour
 ‘ Its flaming brightness from each warrior's side. 220
 ‘ The battle, like a tempest, gathers round;
 ‘ And shortly shall we hear the roar of death.’

Dark, as before a ridge of heav'n's bright fire
 A cloud appears, when on the sky of night
 It pours, and mariners foresee a storm: 225
 Before his host the matchless hero mov'd.—
 On Cona's rising heath, at length, they stood.—
 The maids with snow-white bosoms in the vale
 Beheld them standing like a mountain-grove.—
 Clear they the fall of their lov'd youths foresaw, 230
 And tow'rds the ocean look'd with anxious fear.
 The albid wave they took for distant sails,
 And on their checks appear'd the pearly tear,
 The orbed sun rose glimm'ring on the sea,
 And we a distant, num'rous fleet beheld. 235

As rolls a mist along the main, they came
 And pour'd their youth upon the sounding coast.
 Among them stately stood the warlike chief,
 As stands the stag encircled by the herd.
 With studs of gold his shield is mounted bright
 And stately strode the valiant king of spears.
 Tow'rds Selma he directly bent his course,
 Conducting thousands in his teeming train.

240

‘ Go with thy song of peace,’ then said Fingál;—

‘ Go, Ullin, to the warlike king of swords.

245

‘ Tell him that we are mighty in the field,

‘ And many are the ghosts of our slain foes.—

‘ But great renown have they, who in my halls

‘ Have feasted! They within a foreign land

‘ With pride do shew my great forefathers’ arms.

250

‘ Amaz’d, the sons of strangers at the sight

‘ Rise up and bless the friends of Morven’s race:

‘ For our great names have sounded forth afar:—

‘ The emp’rors of the world *shook* in their *crowds.*’

Then with his song went Ullin.—On his spear

255

Fingál reclining saw the mighty foe

In armour clad, and bless’d the stranger’s son.

‘ Son of the sea, how stately is thy mien !’

The thoughtful king of woody Morven said.

‘ Thy sword, a beam of might, is by thy side !

260

‘ Thy spear a fir defiant of the storm !

‘ The varied face of the resplendent moon

‘ Appears not broader than thy bossy shield !

‘ And ruddy also is thy face of youth,

‘ And soft the ringlets of thy flowing hair !

‘ Yet peradventure this stout tree may fall,

‘ And soon his mem’ry quite forgotten lie !

‘ The daughter of the stranger will be sad,

265

- ‘ And look with sorrow to the rolling sea.
- ‘ The lisping children will observant say : 270
- “ *We see a ship—perhaps Balclutha’s kings.*”—
- ‘ The piteous tear starts from their mother’s eye—
- ‘ Of him that sleeps in Morven are her thoughts.’

In these, or such-like words, spoke Morven’s king,
When Ullin to the mighty Carthon came. 275 .

- Down he before him threw the heavy spear,
And rais’d, in mildest strains, the song of peace :
- ‘ Haste, Carthon, from the rolling sea, and come—
- ‘ Fingál thee welcomes to the royal feast !—
- ‘ Partake the same, or lift the spear of war. 280
- ‘ The ghosts of our slain foes are num’rous, but
- ‘ Renowned are the friends of Morven’s hills !
- ‘ Behold that field, O Carthon—many a hill
- ‘ With mossy stones and grass green rises there:
- ‘ Of those, who came (sons of the rolling sea) 285
- ‘ Foes stubborn to Fingál, these are the tombs.’

‘ Are these thy speeches to the weak in arms,
‘ Bard of the woody Morven ?’ Carthon said.

- ‘ Does fear with paleness overspread my face,
- ‘ Son of the peaceful song ? Why with the tales 290
- ‘ Of those, who fell, didst thou suppose to shade
- ‘ My soul ? In battle often has my arm
- ‘ Engag’d, and my renown is known afar.
- ‘ Go—bid *the weak in arms* yield to Fingál :
- ‘ The fall’n Balclutha have not I beheld ? 295
- ‘ And shall I hold the feast with Comhal’s son ?
- ‘ Comhal ! who in my father’s hall his fire
- ‘ Projectile cast ! *Then* I was young,
- ‘ Nor why the virgins wept knew I the cause.
- ‘ My eyes, the columns of large-curling smoke 300
- ‘ Rising above my walls, with pleasure view’d.

‘ When on the hill my friends in numbers fled,
 ‘ Back often I with rapt’rous gladness look’d.—
 ‘ —But when my years of riper youth came on,
 ‘ My moss-grown walls in ruins I beheld.

305

‘ Then rose my sigh e’er dawn’d the light of day,
 ‘ And my sad tears with night in torrents fell.
 ‘ ‘ Against the children of my baneful foes
 ‘ Shall I not fight?’ ‘ exclaim’d I to my soul.
 ‘ —And fight I *will*, O bard; I feel the strength
 ‘ Of battle growing in my rising soul.’

310

Around the hero pour’d his gath’ring crowd
 And, then unsheathe’d, at once, their shining swords.
 Hé, like a fiery column, in the midst
 Stands with the tear half-starting from his eye; 315
 For of the fall’n Balclutha still he thought,
 And of his soul the crowded pride arose.

Up to the hill he sidelong cast his eye,
 Where in their arms our valiant heroes shone.
 The glitt’ring jav’lin trembled in his hand,
 And, in a bending posture, forth he lean’d,
 And seem’d to threaten Morven’s royal chief.

320

‘ Shall I at once’ (Fingál said to his soul)
 ‘ Meet and prevent the progress of the king?
 ‘ Shall I him stop, before his fame arise?—
 ‘ But, in the time to come, the tuneful bard,
 ‘ When he the tomb of Carthon sees, may say:
 ‘ ‘ Along with him Fingál his thousands took
 ‘ To fight, before the noble Carthon fell.’
 ‘ By no means so,—bard of the times to come,
 ‘ Fingál’s due fame thou never shalt abridge.
 ‘ My heroes will the ruddy youth engage,
 ‘ And looking on the fight Fingál shall stand.
 ‘ If he o’ercome—then, boldly will I rush

325

330

‘ Forth in my strength, like Cona’s roaring stream. 335
 ‘ Who then the son of rolling waves will meet—
 ‘ Which of my heroes?—on the sounding coast
 ‘ His warriors crowd:—strong is his ashen spear! ’

In his great strength the mighty Lormar’s son,
 Cathul arose: three hundred youths the chief 310
 (Descendants of his native streams) attend.
 But he before strong Carthon could not stand.
 Weak was his arm—he fell—his heroes fled.
 The famous Connal next resum’d the fight,
 But soon in pieces lay his broken spear: 345
 In fetters, vanquish’d, on the field he lay,
 And Carthon close his people’s flight pursu’d.

‘ Cléssammor! ’ Then ‘loud cry’d Morven’s king,
 ‘ Where is thy spear of strength? Wilt thou behold,
 ‘ At Lora’s stream, thy friend, great Connal bound? 350
 ‘ Rise in the light of thy bright-beaming steel.
 ‘ Thou friend of Comhal. Let Balclutho’s youth
 ‘ Perceive the strength of Morven’s stormy race.’

He in the strength of his resounding steel
 Directly rose, and shook his grizly locks. 355
 The orbed shield he fitted to his side,
 And onward in the pride of valour rush’d.

Upon that heathy rock then Carthon stood
 And saw the vet’ran hero’s bold approach.
 The joy that issu’d dreadful from his face, 360
 And in his locks of age his strength, he lov’d.
 ‘ That spear, that never strikes a foe, but once,
 ‘ Shall I lift up?’ he said: ‘ or shall I go
 ‘ With words of peace, and save the warrior’s life?
 ‘ Stately indeed appears his steps of age, 365

- ‘ And lovely are the remnant of his years !
- ‘ It perchance may be Moina’s love,
- ‘ The father of Balclutha’s car-borne chief
- ‘ For often heretofore hath Carthon heard
- ‘ That he at Lora’s echoing stream abode.

370

Such were his words when Cléssammor near approach’d,
 And lifted high, with all his strength, the spear.
 The youth receiv’d it on his orbéd shield,
 And thus address’d him in the words of peace :

- ‘ O warrior graceful with the aged locks, 375
- ‘ Is there no youth to lift the spear of strife ?
- ‘ Hast thou no son, that for his father may
- ‘ Raise up the shield, and meet the arm of youth ?
- ‘ Is the fair spouse of thy warm love no more ?
- ‘ Or, weeps she o’er the tombs of thy fall’n sons ? 380
- ‘ Art thou of regal race ? Say, if thou fall,
- ‘ What fame shall crown the vict’ry of my sword ?’

‘ The *greatest* fame, thou haughty son of pride ;’
 Cléssammor straight reply’d : ‘ for I in war
 ‘ Have often been, and fought with honour there : 385

- ‘ But to a foe I never told my name.
- ‘ Son of the wave, submissive to my arms
- ‘ Now yield thyself, and shortly thou shalt know
- ‘ In many a field its mark my sword hath left.’

‘ Ne’er was I known, O king of spears, to yield :’ 390
 The noble pride of Carthon then rejoin’d.

- ‘ In battles also *I myself* have fought !
- ‘ And there with pleasure saw my future fame !
- ‘ Despise me not, thou chief of valiant men—
- ‘ My arm, my spear is strong.—Among thy friends 395
- ‘ Retire, and let the younger heroes fight.’

‘ Why with thy words wound’st thou my troubled soul ?’
 Then Cléssammor answer’d with a falling tear.
 ‘ Age trembles not upon my steady hand,
 ‘ And I can yet with firmness lift the sword. 400
 ‘ Fingál beholds me—can I think to fly
 ‘ In sight of him, whose friendship I revere ?
 ‘ Son of the sea, that boundest o’er the waves,
 ‘ I never fled :—exalt thy pointed spear.’

Like two contending winds, in course oppos’d, 403
 That strive for mast’ry o’er the wave, they fought :
 Yet Carthon (still suspecting that the foe
 Was Moina’s spouse) bade his bright spear to err.
 The spear of Cléssammor in twain he broke,
 And from him wrested his resplendent sword. 410
 But as brave Carthon bound the hoary chief,
 The chief the dagger of his father drew.
 For he the foe’s uncover’d side beheld,
 And with the dagger open’d there a wound.

Brave Cléssammor low, the chief of Morven saw 415
 Onward he mov’d in all his sounding steel.
 In silence deep the host before him stood,
 And tow’rds the hero turn’d their earnest eyes.
 Dreadful as roars a sullen pealing storm,
 Which in the vale the wary hunter hears, 420
 And to the cave within the rock retires
 Before the blust’ring winds arise : *he came.*
 The noble Carthon still maintain’d his ground—
 The blood is rushing from his purple side.
 The royal hero coming down he saw, 425
 And, on a sudden, ‘rose his hopes of fame.
 Yet ghastly paleness overspread his cheek—
 Loose flew his hair—his helmet shook on high.
 The force corporeal of brave Carthon fail’d !
 But still its wonted strength his soul retain’d. 430

The hero's flowing blood Fingál beheld,
 And stop'd th' uplifted spear.—‘ Yield, king of swords,’
 Said Comhal's son, ‘ for I perceive thy blood.
 ‘ In battle thou thy mighty strength hast shewn,
 ‘ And thy renown shall never know decay.’

435

‘ Art thou the king, whose fame hath spread so far ?’
 Reply'd the car-borne Carthon: ‘ art thou then
 ‘ That warrior of renown, that light of death,
 ‘ That strikes *the em'rors of the world* with dread ?
 ‘ But why should Carthon ask ? For he, in force, 440
 ‘ Is like the desert stream ; and, in his course,
 ‘ Strong as a river ; and moreover swift
 ‘ As is th' aerial eagle.—Had it been
 ‘ My fate with Morven's king to fight, my fame
 ‘ Hereafter might have sounded in the song ! 445
 ‘ Then might the hunter my green tomb behold,
 ‘ And say, “ he with Fingál the mighty fought.”
 ‘ But Carthon dies unnotic'd and unknown !
 ‘ He hath upon the feeble spent his force.’

‘ But thou, O warrior, shalt not die unknown,’ 450
 The king of woody Morven then reply'd.
 ‘ My bards are many, and their tuneful songs
 ‘ To future times, O Carthon, shall descend.
 ‘ The sons of years to come brave Carthon's fame
 ‘ Shall hear, whilst round the burning oak they sit, 455
 ‘ And in the songs of old the night is spent.
 ‘ The hunter, sitting on the dusky heath,
 ‘ The rustling blast shall hear and upwards look
 ‘ And see the rock, where valiant Carthon fell.
 ‘ He to his son shall turn, and shew the place 460
 ‘ Where fought the mighty :—“ *There Balclutha's king*
 ‘ *Strong as a thousand streams in battle fought.*”

Joy rose in Carthon's face : his heavy eyes
 He lifted up, and gave Fingál his sword
 Amongst the archieves in his hall to lie : 465
 That the remembrance of Balclutha's king
 In time to come on Morven might remain.
 Along the field the battle was no more,
 And the ag'd bard the song of peace had sung.
 Around the falling Carthon crowded stood
 The chiefs, and heard his words with deepest sighs.
 They on their beamy spears in silence lean'd,
 While fam'd Balclutha's hero spoke.—His hair
 Sigh'd in the gale, and feeble were his words.

‘ O valiant king of Morven,’ Carthon said, 475
 ‘ Amidst the vigour of my course I fall,
 ‘ The last of fam'd Reuthamir's noble race
 ‘ In bloom of youth a foreign tomb receives.
 ‘ Within Balclutha gloomy darkness dwells,
 ‘ And Crathmo veils itself in shades of grief ! 480
 ‘ But, sons of vict'ry, my remembrance raise
 ‘ On Lora's banks, where my forefather's dwelt.
 ‘ The husband of fair Moina, touch'd with grief,
 ‘ O'er his fall'n Carthon too perhaps will mourn.’

Cléssammor's heart his words with piercings reach'd. 485
 He fell, in silence, on his breathless son.
 Darken'd around the host in numbers stood,
 Nor was there heard on Lora's plains a voice.
 Night came—and on the mournful field the moon
 Look'd from the east : but they unmov'd remain'd.— 490
 So, when the winds of boist'rous roar are laid,
 And sable autumn overspreads the plain ;
 On Gormal lifts its head the silent grove.

Three days entire they over Carthon mourn'd,

And on the fourth his mighty father died.
 Within the narrow level of the rock
 They lie, and a dim ghost their tomb defends.
There often is the lovely Moina seen,
 When on the rock the sun-beam scarcely darts,
 And all around is hid in shades of night.
There, but not like the daughters of the hill,
 Is she, Malvina, seen. Her robes are from
 The strangers' land, and she is still alone.

495

500

Fingál was sad for Carthon, and the day,
 When shadowy autumn with its gloomy clouds
 Return'd, to notice gave his bards command.
 And oft' observant did they mark the day
 And sing in dulcet strains the hero's praise.

505

‘ Who comes,’ they said, ‘ like autumn's shadowy cloud
 ‘ From ocean's roar ? Death trembles in his hand ! ’ 510
 ‘ His livid eyes resemble flames of fire ! —
 ‘ Along dark Lora's dusky heath who roars ?
 ‘ Who—but the noble Carthon, king of swords ! ?
 ‘ In crowds before him down the people fall !
 ‘ See ! how he strides, like Morven's sullen ghost ! — 515
 ‘ But prostrate like a goodly, stately oak
 ‘ By whirlwind blasts uprooted, *there* he lies !
 ‘ When shalt thou rise again, Balclutha's joy —
 ‘ When, lovely car-borne Carthon, shalt thou rise ?
 ‘ Who comes, like autumn's shadowy cloud, so dark
 ‘ From ocean's roar—but Carthon, king of swords ? ’ 520

So, in the day of mourning, sung the bards :
 And I myself their voice in concert join'd,
 And added to their song of dirgeful note.
 My soul hath mourn'd for noble Carthon's fate— 525
 He in the days of his great valour fell !
 And thou, braye Clessammor ! Where aloft in air

Is thy abode?—And has the youth his wound
 Forgot—and flies he with thee on the clouds?—
 I feel the sun, Malvina; to my rest
 Me leave. Perhaps they to my dreams may come.
 A feeble voice, methinks, breeze-borne I hear.
 On Carthon's grave the genial beam of heav'n
 Delights to shine—I feel it warm around.

O thou, that round as my forefathers' shield
 Rollest above! Whence are thy beams, O SUN!
 Whence is thy everlasting light?—declare.
 Thou in thy awful beauty comest forth,
 And in the sky the stars themselves enveil;
 Whilst cold and pale within the western wave
 Down sinks the moon, and hides her weaker light.—
 —But THOU, THYSELF, majestic and alone
 In motion art! Who can thy course attend?
 The mountain-oaks do bend with age, and fall:—
Mountains themselves with years likewise decay. 545
 The varying ocean sinks and grows agen:—
 The fading moon herself is lost in heav'n:
 Yet, cheerful in the brightness of thy course,
 THYSELF for ever still remains THE SAME!—
 When direful tempests shade the world beneath,
 When thunder rolls, and forked lightning flies:
 IN BEAUTY THOU, contemptive of the strife,
 Look'st from the clouds with smiles upon the storm.—
 Yet thy bright beams to Ossian are in vain
 [Whether the tinges of thy yellow hair
 The eastern clouds emblazon, as they roll;
 Or, thy bright-setting rays superbly shine
 With trembling motion at the western gates];
 For, he beholds thy cheering beams no more!—
 Yet, thou perhaps (like me) *but for a time*
 Abidst, and then *thy* years will have an end. 560

Regardless of the morning's early voice,
Within thy clouds enshrouded thou shalt sleep.
Exult, O SUN, then in thy strength of youth!
For age is dark and destitute of charms.

565

Such is the moon's opacous, glimm'ring light
Through broken clouds scarce shining, when the mist
Hangs on the hills, and the keen boreal blasts
Upon the plain befreeze the trav'ller's blood,
Who shinks amidst his wintry, lonely way.

570

END OF CARTHON.

The Death of Cuchullin :

A POEM.

ARGUMENT.

ARTH, the son of Cairbre, supreme king of Ireland, dying, was succeeded by his son Cormac, a minor. Cuchullin, the son of Semo, who by his great actions had rendered himself famous, and who resided, at the time, with Connal, the son of Caithbat, in Ulster, was elected Regent. In the twenty-seventh year of Cuchullin's age, and the third of his administration, Torlath, the son of Cantela, one of the chiefs of that colony of Belgæ, who were in possession of the south of Ireland, rebelled in Connaught, and advanced towards Temora, in order to dethrone Cormac; who, expecting Feradath, afterwards king of Ireland, was the only one of the Scottish race of kings existing in that country. Cuchullin marched against him, came up with him at the lake of Lego, and totally defeated his forces. Torlath fell in the battle by Cuchullin's hand; but as he himself pressed too eagerly on the flying enemy, he was mortally wounded by an arrow, and died on the second day after. The good fortune of Cormac fell with Cuchullin, many setting up for themselves, and anarchy and confusion reigned. At last Cormac was taken off; and Cairbar, lord of Atha, one of the competitors for the throne, having defeated all his rivals, became sole monarch of Ireland. The family of Fingal, who were in the interest of Cormac's family, were resolved to deprive Cairbar of the throne he had usurped. Fingal arrived from Scotland with an army, defeated the friends of Cairbar; and re-establishes the family of Cormac in the possession of the kingdom.

The present poem concerns the death of Cuchullin. It is, in the original, called 'Duan loch leigo,' i. e. The poem of Lego's lake,—and is an episode introduced into a great poem, which celebrated the last expedition of Fingal into Ireland. The greatest part of the poem is lost, and nothing remains but some episodes, which a few old people in the north of Scotland retain in memory.

SAY—does the wind with zeph'rous breezes sound
Fingál's broad shield? Or, does the mournful voice
Of seasons past soft echo in my hall?
Sing on, sweet voice! for pleasant are thy strains
Deceptive of my night, with joyful sound.
Bragela, daughter of car-borne Sorglan, sing.

‘ It is the wave white-rolling on the rock,
 ‘ And not Cuchullin’s sails ! Oft’ do the mists,
 ‘ When ‘round some ghost they with their foldings rise,
 ‘ And spread their grizly skirt along the vale ; 10
 ‘ Me for the vessel of my love deceive.
 ‘ Thy long-wish’d coming, gen’rous Semo’s son,
 ‘ Ah ! why dost thou delay ? Back with its winds
 ‘ Four times has autumn come with wintry roar,
 ‘ And rais’d Togorma’s seas ; whilst thou hast been 15
 ‘ Amidst the roar of battles, and afar
 ‘ Bragela waiting for thy wish’d return.
 ‘ Hills of the isle of mist ! when to his hounds
 ‘ Responsive will ye ring ?—But in your clouds
 ‘ Ye hide, and sad Bragela calls in vain. 20
 ‘ With all its clouds dusk night comes rolling down,
 ‘ And lost in mist the face of ocean fails.
 ‘ The heath-cock’s head beneath his fost’ring wing
 ‘ In slumber roosts ; and with the desert-hart
 ‘ The hind reposing in sweet union sleeps. 25
 ‘ They with the early beam of bright’ning morn
 ‘ Shall rise, and on the mossy streamlet feed.
 ‘ But with the sun my show’ring tears return,
 ‘ And with the night my heaving sighs renew.
 ‘ When back, in all thy gleaming armour clad, 30
 ‘ Say—chief of mossy Tura !—wilt thou come ?’

With airs transportant of glad Ossian’s ear,
 Daughter of car-borne Sorglan, comes thy voice !

But, to the hall of shells, to the bright beam

Red-curling from the burning oak retire. 35

There, list’ning to the murmur of the sea

At Dunseaich’s walls wide-rolling all its waves ;

On thy blue eyes let shadowy sleep descend,

And to thy dreams thy wish’d-for hero come.

Amidst his host at Lego's reedy lake, 40
 Where waters darkly roll, Cuchullin sits.
 Night is around the hero, and awide
 His thousands on the shaded heath are spread,
 Encircled 'round a hundred oaks on fire,
 Where the rich feast of shells is smoking 'wide. 45
 With locks grey-glitt'ring to the lambent beam,
 Beneath a tree old Carril strikes the lyre:—
 The rustling blast of night is whistling near,
 And lifts his aged hair. He sweetly sings
 Of blue Togórna and its mighty chief, 50
 Cuchullin's friend: ‘ Why Connal—why not here
 ‘ Amidst the season of the gath'ring storm ?
 ‘ Against the car-borne Cormac, all in arms
 ‘ The southern chiefs in strife of war have met.
 ‘ The adverse winds thy spreading sails detain, 55
 ‘ And, thee encircling, thy blue waters roll.
 ‘ Yet not alone is royal Cormac seen ;
 ‘ For Semo's valiant son his battles fights :—
 ‘ His wars are fought by Semo's valiant son,
 ‘ The dread of strangers ! *He*, that deat ful moves, 60
 ‘ As with slow, gloomy pace, on sultry winds
 ‘ Death's baneful vapour sails ; when in its course
 ‘ The sun grows red—the people fall around.’

Such was the song of Carril, when appear'd
 A herald-son of the near-coming foe. 65
 Down on the ground his pointless spear he threw,
 And thus the threat'ning words of Torlath spoke :
 ‘ Torlath ! of heroes brave the dauntless chief
 ‘ From Lego's sable surge ; he that to fight
 ‘ 'Gainst car-borne Cormac forth his thousands led : 70
 ‘ Cormac ! who in Temora's echoing halls
 ‘ Far distant was. His fathers' bow to bend,
 ‘ And the bright barbed spear to lift, he learn'd.

- ‘ Nor long (thou mildly shining beam of youth !)
- ‘ Didst thou the jav’lin lift. Behind thee death
- ‘ Dim, like the darken’d portion of the moon
- ‘ Behind the crescence of its lustre, stands.’

75

Cuchullin then arose before the bard,
 That from the brave and generous Torlath came.
 Him to the shell of joy he welcome made,
 And gave due honour to the son of songs.

80

- ‘ Sweet voice of Lego !’ said the gen’rous chief ;
- ‘ What are the words of Torlath hither sent ?
- ‘ Cantéla’s car-borne son of noble race,
- ‘ Say—to our *feast* or *battle* does he come ?’

85

- ‘ He to thy battle comes !’ reply’d the bard,
- ‘ And to the clangor of the strife of spears.
- ‘ When grey on Lego shines the orient morn,
- ‘ Then on the plain will dauntless Torlath fight.
- ‘ And wilt thou in the splendour of thy arms,
- ‘ King of the isle of mist, enmail’d him meet ?
- ‘ From Torlath’s matchless spear dread terror flames ;
- ‘ Tremendous as a meteor of the night.
- ‘ He lifts it up—the people fall, and death
- ‘ Sits frightful in the lightning of his sword.’

90

95

- ‘ Am I afraid,’ Cuchullin then reply’d,
- ‘ Of car-borne Torlath’s spear ?—His brav’ry can
- ‘ At once a thousand heroes in the fight
- ‘ Meet fearless ; but my soul delights in war.
- ‘ The sabre rests not by Cuchullin’s side,
- ‘ Bard of the times of old ! Me, on the plain,
- ‘ Morning shall meet, and, in its splendor, gleam
- ‘ On the blue armour of great Semo’s son.
- ‘ But on the nightly heath sit thou, O bard !

100

• And let us hear thy voice: freely partake 105
• The joyful shell, and hear Temora's songs.'

‘ This is no time,’ reply’d the hoary bard,
‘ To hear the song of joy ; when strong in fight,
‘ As Lego’s waves, the mighty are to meet.
‘ Slimora ! Why with all thy silent woods
‘ Art thou so dark ? Upon thy hazy top
‘ No green star trembles, nor upon thy side
‘ With silver brightness is a moon-beam seen :
‘ But death’s dim meteors direfully there glide,
‘ And the grey wat’ry forms of ghosts. Why dark
‘ Art thou (Slimóra !) with thy silent woods ?’

Back in the music of his song he went,
And Carril *sung* symphonious with his voice.
With airs sublime the trembling music roll'd,
Sweet as the memory of the seasons past,
That strikes the soul with sorrow and delight.
The shady ghosts of tuneful bards no more,
With rapture, heard it from Slimóra's side.
Along the woods soft, trembling sounds are spread,
And the still vales of silent night rejoice.
So comes with pleasing sound to Ossian's ear,
When in the valley of his breeze he sits,
That fans refreshment in the silent noon ;
The trem'lous humming of the mountain-bee:
Th' inconstant gale oft drowns it in its course,
But pleasant, soon, again returns the sound.

‘ Raise,’ said Cuchullin to his hundred bards,
• The song of fam’d Fingál of noble might—
• That song, which, when amidst his rest descend
• The visions of his dreams, at night he hears ; 135
• When the skill’d bards soft strike the distant lyre.

- ‘ And faintly gleams the light on Selma’s walls.
- ‘ Or, let the dark’ning grief of Lara rise,
- ‘ And Calmar’s mother’s sighs of heaving strength ;
- ‘ When on his hills he, but in vain, was sought, 140
- ‘ And on his bow within the hall she look’d.
- ‘ Carril, the shield of Caithbat on that branch
- ‘ Suspend, and let Cuchullin’s spear be near.
- ‘ That, with the morn grey-beaming from the east,
- ‘ The signal of my battle may arise.’ 145

Upon his father’s shield the hero lean’d,
And in sweet strains the song of Lara rose.
Far at a distance stood the hundred bards ;—
Carril alone is near the mighty chief.

- His* were the words melodious of the song, 150
And mournful was the warbling of his lyre.
- ‘ Alcletha with the hoary locks of age !
- ‘ Mother of car-borne Calmar ! Why, to see
- ‘ Thy son returning, tow’rds the desert look ?
- ‘ These that appear dark on the shady heath
- ‘ Are not his heroes, nor is that the voice 155
- ‘ Of Calmar ; it is but the distant grove—
- ‘ The roar, Alcletha, of the mountain-wind.’

- “ Sister of noble Calmar, say who bounds”
- ‘ (Amidst her rising hopes, Alcletha said)’ 163
- “ O’er Lara’s stream ? Does not Alcletha see
- “ His spear ? But with old age her eyes are dim !
- “ O daughter of my love, attentive look,
- “ And say—if he indeed be Matha’s son ?”

- “ It is, Alcletha, but an aged oak !”
- ‘ Alona said, the lovely, weeping fair.’
- “ ’Tis but an oak, Alcletha, o’er the stream
- “ Of Lara bent. But who along the plain

“ Here comes in haste, with sorrow in his speed ?—
 “ High he the massy spear of Calmar lifts. 170
 “ Aleletha ! ‘tis with purple blood besmear’d !”

“ But—with the slaughter of the vanquish’d foes”
 “ (Relpy’d Aleletha hopeful for the best)’
 “ Sister of ear-borne Calmar, it is red !
 “ Never unstained with the blood of foes 175
 “ His spear return’d, nor from the strife of might
 “ His dauntless brow (the emblem of his heart).
 “ The battle in his presence is consum’d,
 “ And he, Alone, is a flame of death !
 “ Youth of the mournful speed ! speak out, and say 180
 “ Where is Aleletha’s son ? Amidst his fame—
 “ Amidst his echoing shields does he return ?
 “ But dark and silent thou, alas ! remain’st !
 “ And, therefore, Calmar is alas ! *no more.*
 “ Tell me not warrior, *how the hero fell* ; 185
 “ *For of his wound I cannot bear the tale.*”

“ Mother of ear-borne Calmar, in thy grief
 “ Why tow’rds the desert dost thou turn thy eyes ?”

So Carril sung, when on his bossy shield
 Cuchullin lay : the bards upon their harps 190
 Were resting, and around sleep softly fell.
 Alone the son of Semo was awake,
 And on the war his soul was fix’d attent.
 The burning oaks with fading flame decay’d,
 And a red light is faintly spread around.— 195
 With trembling sound a feeble voice is heard !—
 Then through the dusk the ghost of Calmar came,
 And stalked stately in the gloomy beam.
 Dark in his shady side the wound appears,
 And his lank hair disorder’d is, and loose. 200

Dark on his face joy sits, and to his cave
Invitant of Cuchullin he appears.

The rising chief of Erin thus reply'd :
 ' Son of the cloudy night ! why darkly bend,
 ' O car-borne Calmar's ghost, thy eyes on me ? 205
 ' Would'st thou from Cormac's battles me deter,
 ' O M:tha's son ! Not feeble in the war
 ' Was thy strong hand, nor was thy voice for peace.
 ' How varied, chief of Lara, is thy mind,
 ' If now immediate flight thou dost advise ! 210
 ' Never, O Calmar, was I known to fly ;
 ' Nor of the desert-ghost was I afraid.
 ' They know but little, and their hands are weak,
 ' And their abode is in the vapoury void.
 ' But my firm soul in gath'ring danger grows 215
 ' And in the sound of rattling steel delights.
 ' Retire thou to thy solitary cave ;---
 ' Thou art not Calmar's ghost, for he in fight
 ' Rejoic'd ; and like heav'n's thunder was his arm.'

Then in his blast with joy, for he had heard
The plaudit of his praises, he retir'd. 220
 The orient beam of morning faintly shone,
 And wide the sound of Caithbat's buckler spread.
 Green Ullin's warriors, like th' united roar
 Of many streams, prepar'd for fight conven'd.
 O'er Lego too the horn of war is heard, 225
 And in his arms the mighty Torlath came.

' Why with thy thousands,' said dark Lego's chief,
 ' Dost thou, Cuchullin, come ? The mighty strength
 ' Of thy strong arm I know, and thy great soul 230
 ' With ardour unextinguish'd burns like fire.
 ' Why fight we not upon the swarthy plain,

- ‘ And let our hosts stand looking on our deeds ?
- ‘ Let them behold us loud as roaring waves
- ‘ Large tumbling round a rock ; when from the place 235
- ‘ Away th’ affrighted mariners turn their course
- ‘ And look with fear upon the noisy strife ?

- ‘ Thou risest, like the sun, upon my soul,’
Reply’d the son of Semo. ‘ Thy dread arm,
‘ Torlath, is strong ; and worthy of my wrath. 240
- ‘ Ye men of Ullin’s verdant, fertile plains,
‘ To dark Slimora’s shady side retire,
‘ And in the day of his illustrious fame
‘ Upon the noble chief of Erin look.
- ‘ Carril ! O bard, to mighty Connal tell— 245
- ‘ If now Cuchullin should in combat fall,
‘ Tell him that I those breezes held in blame
‘ Which on Togorma’s rolling billows roar.
- ‘ Ne’er was he absent from the roaring plain,
‘ Whene’er the strife of my renown arose. 250
- ‘ Before great Cormac let his sabre be
‘ Bright as the beam coruscant in the heav’n’s :
‘ And in the day, when frowning danger lours
‘ In green Temora, let his counsel sound.’

- Then, in the clangor of his arms he rush’d, 255
Like Loda’s spirit, dreadful in approach,
When in a thousand storms he pealing comes
And scatters battles from his angry eyes.
Whilst on his sword his mighty hand is plac’d,
And the strong tempest lifts his flaming locks ; 260
O’er Lochlin’s seas he sits upon a cloud.
Such in his day of fame Cuchullin was !
By his strong hand the mighty Torlath fell,
And Lego’s sadd’ning heroes greatly mourn’d.
Thick as the clouds from the wild desert pour, 265

They gather 'round the chief.—At once, arose
 A thousand swords ; a thousand arrows flew.
 Yet, like a rock amidst a roaring sea,
 Firm he his ground maintain'd. They fell around.
 In blood he strode, and echoes far and wide
 The dark Slimora gave. Green Ullin's sons
 Came, and the battle over Lego spread.
 Victorious on, the chief of Erin strode,
 And o'er the field with his renown return'd—
 But paleness on his fading visage sat.
 Dark was the once-bright lustre of his face,
 And sadly he in silence roll'd his eyes.
 Unsheathed in his hand the sabre hung,
 And at each step his beamy jav'lin bent.

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‘ Cuchullin's strength,’ the king in secret said,
 ‘ O Carril, fails. And, with the years now gone,
 ‘ My days are fled. And to my mem'ry past
 ‘ No grief shall rise. At green Temora they
 ‘ Shall for me seek, but I shall not be found.
 ‘ Cormac within his hall will weep, and say :
 ‘ Where is the chief of Tura ?’—‘ But renown'd
 ‘ My name shall stand by tuneful bards in song.
 ‘ The youth will say in secret : “ Let me die
 ‘ As great Cuchullin dy'd.—Fame, like a robe,
 ‘ Him cloth'd, and brightly shines his great renown.”
 ‘ Draw from my side the arrow, and beneath
 ‘ That oak Cuchullin lay. And, near at hand,
 ‘ The shield of Caithbat place ; that me laid low
 ‘ Amidst my fathers' arms they may behold.’

‘ And is the noble son of Semo fall'n ?’
 Said Carril with a sigh.—‘ In lorn despair
 ‘ The walls of Tura mourn, and black'ning grief
 ‘ At Dunscaich dwelis. Alone, in bloom of youth,

‘ Thy spouse is left, and thy lov’d son, alone. 300
 ‘ He to Bragéla shall, in great amaze,
 ‘ Come and enquire the reason why she weeps—
 ‘ Then, to the wall shall lift his wond’ring eyes,
 ‘ And, seeing his father’s sword, enquiring say :
 ‘ Whose sword is that ?’—‘ his mother’s soul is sad !—
 ‘ —Who, like the desert-hart in swiftness, comes 305
 ‘ Amidst the murmur of his sounding course ?
 ‘ In eager search of his beloved friend,
 ‘ His eyes look wildly round.—Where, Colgar’s son—
 ‘ Where, Connal, wast thou, when the mighty fell ?
 ‘ Say—did Togorma’s seas around thee roll ? 310
 ‘ Or, blew the southern tempests in thy sails ?
 ‘ The mighty have amidst the battle fall’n,
 ‘ Nor wast thou there. Let none the news promulge
 ‘ In Selma, nor in Morven’s woody land.
 ‘ Sorrow will seize the bosom of Fingál, 315
 ‘ And the low sons of the wild desert mourn !

By misty Lego’s darkly-rolling waves
 The hero’s tomb they rais’d.—Not far off lies
 Luath, his constant hunter at the chase.

‘ Ever blest be thy soul, gen’rous Semo’s great son ;— 320
 ‘ Thou wast valiant and mighty in fight.
 ‘ Thy strength was, in pow’r, like the strength of a stream ;
 ‘ Thy speed, like the eagle’s in flight.
 ‘ In battle, dread terror emblazon’d thy path—
 ‘ Death stalked behind thee in war ! 325
 ‘ Ever blest be thy soul, gen’rous Semo’s great son,
 ‘ Dunascaich’s noble chief of the car !
 ‘ Not by the skill’d sword of the mighty at last
 ‘ Wast thou, O brave warrior ! slain ;

‘ Neither did thy warm blood gushing from the fresh wound 330
 ‘ The spear of the valiant stain.

‘ In a blast flew the arrow, like death’s fatal sting ;
 ‘ Nor did the weak bow-man perceive.

‘ May peace in thy cave, ever be to thy soul ;
 ‘ Of the island of mist, O thou chief ! 335

‘ None remains at Temora in Cormac’s high hall—
 ‘ The mighty are scatter’d abroad.

‘ The young royal chieftain sees not thy return,
 ‘ But despairs—and sinks under the load.

‘ Now ceas’d evermore is the sound of thy shield, 340
 ‘ And his foes are thick-gathering round !

‘ Within thy lone cave, chief of green Erin’s wars,
 ‘ Soft be thy repose, and profound !

‘ Bragela no longer shall hope thy return,
 ‘ Nor gaze for thy sails on ocean’s foam. 345

‘ Her steps are no longer abroad on the shore,
 ‘ But pensive she sits at her home.

‘ To the voice of thy rowers replowing the main
 ‘ Attention no longer she yields.

‘ May peace in thy cave ever sooth thy great soul, 350
 ‘ Dunscaich’s noble breaker of shields !

‘ She sits in the mansion of once-sounding shells,
 ‘ Nor ceases her soul to deplore.

‘ The warrior, whose armour attent she beholds—
 ‘ The warrior, that *now is no more* ! 355

‘ Car-borne Sorglan’s daughter’s once-beautiful eyes
 ‘ From fast-flowing tears never rest.

‘ Of dark, shady Cromla thou valiant chief,
 ‘ In death be thy soul ever blest !

END OF THE DEATH OF CUCHULLIN.

Dar-thula :

A POEM.

ARGUMENT.

IT may not be improper here, to give the story, which is the foundation of this poem, as it is handed down by tradition. Usnoth, lord of Etha, which is probably that part of Argyleshire which is near Loch Eta, an arm of the sea in Lorn; had three sons, Nathos, Althos, and Ardan, by Slissama, the daughter of Semo, and sister to the celebrated Cuchullin. The three brothers, when very young, were sent over to Ireland, by their father, to learn the use of arms under their uncle Cuchullin, who made a great figure in that kingdom. They were just landed in Ulster, when the news of Cuchullin's death arrived. Nathos, though very young, took the command of Cuchullin's army, made head against Cairbar the usurper, and defeated him in several battles. Cairbar at last having found means to murder Cormac, the lawful king; the army of Nathos shifted sides, and he himself was obliged to return into Ulster, in order to pass over into Scotland.

Dar-thula, the daughter of Colla, with whom Cairbar was in love, resided at that time in Selama, a castle in Ulster; she saw, fell in love, and fled with Nathos. But a storm arising at sea, they were unfortunately driven back on that part of the coast of Ulster, where Cairbar was encamped with his army, waiting for Fingal, who meditated an expedition into Ireland, to re-establish the Scottish race of kings on the throne of that kingdom. The three brothers, after having defended themselves, for some time, with great bravery, were overpowered and slain, and the unfortunate Dar-thula killed herself upon the body of her beloved Nathos.

Ossian opens the poem, on the night preceding the death of the sons of Usnoth; and brings in, by way of episode, what passed before. He relates the death of Dar-thula differently from the common tradition. Which account is the more probable, as suicide seems to have been unknown in those early times; for, no traces of it are found in the old poetry.

HEAVN's fair daughter of bright grace!

Sweetly silent is thy face,

Robed in thy lovely vest,

Forth thou comest from the east;

Whilst, attending on thy way,

Thy blue steps the stars obey.

In thy presence, rising moon,
Thickest clouds forget their gloom.
In compliance with thy glare,
Straight, their dark-brown sides appear. 10
Daughter of the silent night,
Who in heav'n emits such light ?
In thy presence, struck with shame,
All the stars withdraw their beam ;
And their green and sparkling eyes 15
Turn aside, nor dare to rise.
Whither from thy lucent race
Dost thou fly, when of thy face
Crescent darkness veils the whole ?
Hast thou, Ossian-like, thy hall ? 20
Say, in search of some relief,
Dwell'st thou in the shade of grief ?
And, to like resources driv'n,
Have thy sisters fall'n from heav'n ?
They, who joy'd with thee, before— 25
Shine they bright, at night, no more ?
Yes ! fair light ! fall'n is their fire:
And *thou*, to mourn, dost oft' retire.
But thou thyself, one night, shalt set in gloom,
And thy blue path in heav'n no more illumine. 30

Then, their green and sparkling heads
The stars will lift, nor fear dismay—
In thy presence they'll rejoice,
Now in blushes sink away.
Look, with thy bright majesty, 35
From thy portals in the sky.

That forth with all her bright and circling rays,
The daughter of night may in her brightness blaze—
That to the clear and gloom-dispersing beam

The shaggy mountains may responsive gleam,
And ocean roll its billows blue in light :
Now burst the cloud, O wind, with roaring might.

Upon the deep young Nathos makes his way,
With blooming Althos, that fair beam of youth !
And Ardan near his brothers too abides. 40

They move amidst the glimm'ring of their course—
From car-borne Cairbar's burning, deadly wrath
The sons of Usnoth in the darkness *move*.
Say, who is that dim-moving by their side
With beauteous form, enrob'd in mist of night? 50

On ocean's wind loud sighs her jetty hair—
In dusky wreaths wide streams her flowing robe.
As when the lucid spirit of heav'n in mist
With lustre scarce-abateable is mov'd :
Such is the splendour of her shaded mien ! 55

—Who, but Dar-thula, first of Erin's maids ?
She with the car-borne Nathos, in his flight,
From Cairbar's love has made her utmost way.
But, O Dar-thula, thee the winds deceive ;
And Etha's woods to thy spread sails deny. 60

—O Nathos, *these* are not thy airy hills,
Nor *that* the roaring of thy climbing waves.
Adjacent, Cairbar's halls high-raised stand,
And hostile mansions lift their tow'ring heads.
Its head green Ullin juts into the sea, 65

And Tura's bay the stressed ship receives.
Ye southern breezes, whither have ye stray'd
Deceptive of the sons of my esteem ?—
But ye, pursuant of the thistle's beard,
Have sportive made the rural plains your place. 70

O that within the sails of Nathos ye
Had rustled till the hills of Etha rose—
Till in their clouds of darkness they had ris'n ;

And seen their coming chief ! But absent long,
 O Nathos, hast thou been ; and now no more
 Presents itself, the day of thy return.

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But thee the land of strangers *fair* beheld,
 And thou wast lovely in Dar-thula's eyes.
 Thy face was like the brightness of the morn,
 And like the raven-wing thy jetty hair. 80
 Calm as the season of the setting sun,
 With gen'rous mildness shone thy placid soul.
 Thy words were like the zephyrs of the reeds,
 Or smooth as glides green Lora's winding stream.
 Yet, when the rage of angry battle rose,
 Thou wast in semblance like a stormy sea.
 Dreadfully clang'd thy arms, and, at the sound,
 Thy course the evanescent host forsook.
 'Twas then Dar-thula, from her mossy tow'r—
 From Selama's tow'r, where her forefather's dwelt, 90
 With eyes of love down on thy person look'd.

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‘ Lovely, O stranger, is thy form !’ she said,
 (For at the sight her trembling soul arose)
 ‘ Friend of fail'n Cormac, in thy feats of war
 ‘ Fair art thou seen !—With all thy brav'ry fir'd, 95
 ‘ Youth of the ruddy look, why dost thou rush ?
 ‘ Against the car-borne Cairbar, strong in might,
 ‘ Few are thy hands in fight ! O from my love
 ‘ That disengag'd I stood—that I with joy
 ‘ In Natho's presence ever might abide !
 ‘ Blest are the rocks of Etha ! At the chase
 ‘ His steps they will behold ! With gladness they,
 ‘ When the soft zephyrs lift his raven-hair,
 ‘ Upon his bosom, white as snow, will look.’ 100

Such, O Dar-thula, were thy words of love 105
 In Selamia's mossy tow'rs.—But now the night
 Is round thee ; and the winds have fail'd thy sails—
 The winds, Dar-thula, have *deceiv'd* thy sails,
 Though high they blust'ring sound.—Ye boreal gales,
 A little while be still, and let me hear 110
 The lovely fair-one's voice of accents sweet.
 For lovely sounds, between the rustling blasts,
 Thy voice, Dar-thula, of the accent sweet.

‘ Are these the rocks of Nathos ?’ said the maid :
 ‘ Is this the roaring of his mountain-streams ? 115
 ‘ Beams forth from Usnoth's nightly hall *that light* ?
 ‘ The mist around is rolling, and the beam
 ‘ Emits the splendour of a feeble blaze.
 ‘ Yet the bright splendour of Dar-thula's soul
 ‘ Is Etha's car-borne chief !—But now declare 120
 ‘ Why, gen'rous Usnoth's son, that broken sigh ?
 ‘ O chief of echoing Etha, me resolve—
 ‘ Are we not to the land of strangers brought ?’

‘ *These* are not Nathos' rocks,’ reply'd the chief:
 ‘ Nor *that* the roaring of his mountain-streams: 125
 ‘ Nor does that light from Etha's halls proceed.
 ‘ For they are distant far.—Our dark abode
 ‘ Is in the land of strangers—in the land
 ‘ Of car-borne Cairbar. On our bending sails
 ‘ The winds, Dar-thula, have deceptive blown. 130
 ‘ *Here* her green hills the land of Ullin lifts.
 ‘ Go, Althos, tow'rds the north.—Along the coast,
 ‘ O Arden, move, lest us the foe surprise
 ‘ In darkness, and our hopes of Etha fail.
 ‘ I tow'rds that mossy tow'r will go, and see 135
 ‘ Who dwells about the beam. Upon the shore
 ‘ Dar-thula, here abide—abide in peace,

‘ Thou beam of light!—Around thee brightly shines
 ‘ The sword of Nathos, like heav’n’s lightning clear.’

He went.—Alone upon the shore she sat
 And heard the rolling of the restless wave.
 Big is the tear bright-starting from her eye,
 And for the car-borne Nathos ’round she looks.
 Her trembling soul shakes at the coming blast,
 And for his tread her list’ning ear she turns :
 But yet no trampling of his feet is heard.

‘ Son of my love, where art thou?’ she exclaim’d:
 ‘ The roaring of the blast around me pours,
 ‘ And dark and gloomy is the cloudy night.
 ‘ But Nathos does not yet to me return—
 ‘ Say—chief of Etha, what can thee detain ?
 ‘ Have the dark foes advantag’d by the dusk,
 ‘ The hero met amidst the strife of night?’

He came again, but dark his face appear’d ;
 For he his friend departed had beheld.—
 ’Twas Tura’s wall, and there in silence stalk’d
 Cuchullin’s ghost. And frequently arose
 The sighing of his breast, and of his eyes
 Th’ expirant flame with dreadful aspect gleam’d.
 A misty column was his airy spear,
 And stars dim-twinkled through his shady form.
 With hollow voice, as sounds the repant wind
 In the lone cave, he told the tale of grief.—
 As, when the sun wades in the day of mist,
 His sicken’d face is wat’ry seen, and dim :
 The shaded soul of Nathos sad’ly droop’d.

‘ Ah! why,’ then Colla’s lovely daughter said,
 ‘ Art thou, O Nathos, sad?—A beam of light
 ‘ Thou to Darthula art :—On Etha’s chief,

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‘ Her eyes with rapture look. Who is my friend 170
 ‘ But Nathos?—In the tomb my father rests.
 ‘ On Selama silence dwells, and sadness spreads
 ‘ Upon the streams blue-rolling in my land.
 ‘ The mighty have with low-laid Cormac fall’n!
 ‘ The mighty were in Ullin’s battles slain! 175
 ‘ Dusk ev’ning darken’d on the gloomy plain,
 ‘ And the blue streams soon fail’d my watchful eyes
 ‘ In the high tops of Selama’s spacious groves
 ‘ With murmur’rant rustling came th’ unfrequent blast.
 ‘ Beneath a tree upon my fathers’ walls 180
 ‘ I lonely sat: when lo! before my soul
 ‘ Pale Truthil pass’d—the brother of my love—
 ‘ He, that was absent from the field of fight
 ‘ Against the car-borne Cairbar.—On his spear,
 ‘ Bending with age, the grey-hair’d Colla came. 185
 ‘ Dark is his down-east face, and in his soul
 ‘ Sad sorrow dwells. Down from the hero’s side
 ‘ His sabre hangs, and on his louring head
 ‘ Th’ encrusted helmet of his fathers shines.
 ‘ Hot in his breast the rage of battle grows, 190
 ‘ And the full-bursting tear he strives to hide.

“ Dearest Dar-thula,” ‘ then he sighing said,
 “ Thou art the last of Colla’s ancient race.
 “ Truthil is fall’n in battle—and no more
 “ Lives Selama’s king. And Cairbar, big with joy, 195
 “ Tow’rds Selama’s walls with all his thousands comes,
 “ But, of his son avengeant, his great pride
 “ Will Colla meet.—But ah! Dar-thula where
 “ (My last survivor with the dark-brown hair!)
 “ Shall I thy safety find? Thou to the sight! 200
 “ Art splendid as the glorious sun of heav’n
 “ Enforcing day—but all thy friends are low!”

“ And is the sun of battle fall’n ?” “ I said,
 ‘ Amidst a bursting sigh of heaving grief ?’
 “ Ceased the mighty Truthil’s gen’rous soul
 “ To lighten through the field ? Plac’d in that bow
 “ My safety, Colla, stands :—to pierce the deer
 “ I learned heretofore. Fall’n Truthil’s sire,
 “ Say—is not Cairbar like the desert-hart ?”

205

“ Then bright with joy became the face of age,
 “ And from his eyes down pour’d the crowded tears.
 “ The lips of Colla trembled, and his beard
 “ Grey-whistled in the blast.—“ Thou art,” he said,
 “ The sister of Truthil ; for within thy veins
 “ The fire of his great soul enkindled runs.
 “ Dar-thula take”—he added, “ *take that spear,*
 “ That brazen shield, and that bright-burnish’d helm,
 “ They are a warrior’s once-exuviate spoils—
 “ A son of early youth.—When beams of morn
 “ On Sélama rise bright-beaming from the east,
 “ The ear-borne Cairbar then we go to meet.
 “ But still beneath the shadow of my shield
 “ Near Colla’s arm thy cautious station keep.
 “ *There was a time*, when steel’d with youthful strength
 “ Thy father thee, Dar-thula, could defend :
 “ But feeble age now trembles on his hand.
 “ The pristine force of his strong arm has fail’d,
 “ And growing sorrow shades his fading soul.”

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“ We pass’d the night in grief.—With radiant beams
 “ The light of morn arose. Amidst its rays
 “ I in the glitt’ring arms of battle shone :
 “ Whilst on, the grey-hair’d hero mov’d before,
 “ The sons of Sélama then conven’d around
 “ The sounding shield of Colla. Yet, they stood
 “ Few in the plain, and their ag’d locks were grey.

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‘ With car-borne Cormac in conflicting strife,
 ‘ The youths with Truthil had already fall’n.’

“ Companions of my youth!” ‘ ag’d Colla said,’ 210
 “ It was not thus you me in arms have seen—
 “ It was not thus, when great Confádan fell, 245
 “ That I to battle strode. But loads of grief
 “ Depress your minds, and, like the desert-mist,
 “ Age comes with aspect dark. My shield with years
 “ Is worn, and in its place is fix’d my sword.
 “ Calm shall thy ev’ning be, I to my soul 250
 “ Once said, and like a fading light thy end:—
 “ But back the storm upon my peace has come
 “ And like an aged oak I drooping bend.
 “ My boughs on Sélama now, alas, are fall’n,
 “ And I survvant tremble in my place.
 “ Where with thy fallen heroes art thou gone,
 “ O Truthil of my love?—From thy swift blast 255
 “ Thou giv’st thy aged father no reply;
 “ And with his fate his grief-worn soul is sad!
 “ But sadness shall no more surprise my soul:—
 “ Cairbar or Colla now must shortly fall.
 “ I feel the strength returning to my arm,
 “ And my glad heart leaps at the sound of war.”

“ The hero drew his sword, and, at the sign, 260
 “ The gleaming blades of all his people rose.
 “ Along the plain they mov’d, and in the wind
 “ Grey stream’d their hair.—In Lona’s silent plain,
 “ Amidst his festive triumph, Cairbar sat.
 “ The quick advance of heroes he perceiv’d,
 “ And all his num’rous chiefs to battle call’d.

‘ How the loud strife of angry battle grew,
 ‘ To Nathos of the shield why should I tell?

- ‘ Thee in the midst of thousands have I seen,
‘ Like the dread beam of heav’n’s coruscant fire.
- ‘ ‘Tis beautiful, but terrible to view, 270
- ‘ And in its redd’ning course the people fall.—
- ‘ The spear of Colla flew :—for to his mind
‘ The mem’ry of his youthful battles came.
- ‘ Then came a barbed arrow with its sound,
‘ And pierc’d the hero’s side ; when down he fell 275
- ‘ Upon his echoing shield. My soul with fear
‘ Was seiz’d, and o’er him I my buckler stretch’d:
- ‘ But plain my heaving breast appear’d to view.
- ‘ Then with his spear came Cairbar, and beheld
‘ Lorn Sélama’s maid :—and on his dark-brown face 280
- ‘ Joy rose, and lo !—he stay’d the lifted steel.
- ‘ He rais’d the tomb of Colla, and me brought
‘ To Sélama bath’d in tears. To me he spoke
- ‘ The words of love, but sadness seiz’d my soul.
- ‘ The shields of my forefathers, and the sword 285
- ‘ Of car-borne Truthil struck my pained eyes.
- ‘ My dead forefathers’ armour I perceiv’d,
‘ And on my cheek the tear of grief abode.

- ‘ Then thou didst come, O Nathos, and in haste
‘ Fled gloomy Cairbar.—Like the desert-ghost 290
- ‘ Before the beam of morn, away he fled.
- ‘ For, absent were his hosts, and for thy steel
‘ Unequal (Nathos !) was his feeble arm.
- ‘ Why art thou sad ?’ said Colla’s lovely maid.

- ‘ I in my youth,’ the answ’ring hero said, 295
‘ The battle met.—When first the danger rose,
‘ My arm was not an equal for the spear :—
- ‘ Yet ’fore the war my bright’ning soul arose.
- ‘ So, when the sun his streamy beamings pours,
‘ Before his head he hides within a storm, 300

‘ Emblazon’d stands the verdant narrow vale.
 ‘ Before I Sélama’s fair beheld—before
 ‘ *Thee*, like a star, that shines upon the hill
 ‘ By night, I saw ; my soul in danger beam’d.
 ‘ But, minitant of the lovely light, a cloud,
 ‘ Its rays to shade, with slow advancement comes.
 ‘ Within the hostile land we still remain,
 ‘ And us, Dar-thula, have the winds deceiv’d!
 ‘ Far distant is the bulwark of our friends,
 ‘ Nor near at hand are Etha’s mountains seen.
 ‘ Daughter of mighty Colla, where thy peace
 ‘ Shall I explore?—With martial brav’ry fir’d
 ‘ The brothers of Nathos stand, and his own sword
 ‘ Has shone in war.—But what are Usnoth’s sons
 ‘ When fore the host of car-borne Cairbar drawn!
 ‘ O that the winds, brave Oscar, king of men,
 ‘ Thy sails had brought!—To fallen Cormac’s wars
 ‘ Thou giv’st thy full assurance soon to come.
 ‘ Then would my hand for fight in strength have been
 ‘ As flames the arm of death, and Cairbar would
 ‘ With consternation tremble in his halls,
 ‘ And peace around the fair Dar-thula dwell.
 ‘ But why, my soul dost thou with droopings fall?
 ‘ *Ev’n yet* the sons of Usnoth may prevail.’

‘ And, Nathos,’ said the virgin’s rising soul,
 ‘ Prevail they *will*: nor gloomy Cairbar’s halls
 ‘ Shall e’er Dar-thula in her grief behold.
 ‘ Give me those arms of brass—those glitt’ring arms,
 ‘ Which to that passing meteor brightly gleam—
 ‘ In the dark-bosom’d ship I them perceive.
 ‘ The strife of steel Dar-thula gladly joins.
 ‘ Ghost of the noble Colla! On that cloud
 ‘ Perceive I thee? Who sits behind thee dim?
 ‘ Tis car-borne Truthil’ Shall these eyes behold

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‘ The halls of him, that Sélama’s chief laid low ? 335
‘ No—spirits of my love, them I’ll not see !’

Joy in the face of Nathos brightly rose
 When he the snow-white-bosom'd virgin heard.
 ‘ Daughter of Sélama ! Thou bright fair ! ’ He said,
 ‘ Thy lovely beams illume my bright’ning soul. 340
 ‘ Come, Cairbar, with thy thousands—I’m prepar’d—
 ‘ For back the wonted strength of Nathos comes.
 ‘ Nor that thy son did from the battle fly
 ‘ Shalt thou hereafter, aged Usnoth, hear.
 ‘ Thy words on Etha, when with broad expanse
 ‘ My sails arose—when I tow’rds Ullin’s land—
 ‘ Tow’rds Tura’s mossy walls them spread ; recur.
 “ Thou, Nathos, to the king of shields,” he said,
 “ —Him, who from dark’ning danger never shrunk,
 “ Cuchullin, chief of men : art on thy way. 350
 “ Let not thy arm be weak, nor on base flight
 “ Thy thoughts employ : lest noble Seimo’s son
 “ Pronounce the warlike race of Etha weak.
 “ So may his words to Usnoth chance to come,
 “ And in the hall his spirit sadly lour.”—
 “ —With tearful cheek he gave this shining sword.

‘ To Tura’s bay I came—but Tura’s halls
‘ In lonely solitude and silence stood:
‘ When lo! around, to know the cause, I look’d—
‘ But none remain’d of Dunscaich’s chief to tell. 360
‘ To the high hall of his once-festive shells,
‘ Where his forfathers’ armour hung, I went :
‘ But lo! those arms, with all their bulk, were gone,
‘ And drown’d in tears the aged Lamhor sat.
“ Whence”—said the rising Lamhor, “ whence arrive 365
“ The arms of steel?—From Tura’s dusky walls
“ Long absent has the spear of brightness been

“ Approach ye from the rolling of the main,
 “ Or, come ye from Temora’s mournful halls ?”

“ We from the sea, from Usnoth’s rising tow’rs 370
 “ Are come,” ‘ I said.’ “ From Slissama we are sprung,
 “ The daughter of ear-borne Semo. Tell us where
 “ Son of the silent hall, is Tura’s chief ?—
 “ But why should Nathos ask ? I see thy tears.
 “ How, son of Tura, did the mighty fall ?” 375

“ He fell not,” ‘ said lone Lamhor in reply,’
 “ As falls the silent star obscure in night
 “ When once through darkness shot, no more ’tis seen :—
 “ But as with aspect fierce in distant lands
 “ A meteor falls.—Death its red course attends, 380
 “ And of dread wars it is itself the sign.
 “ Mournful and dark are Lego’s reedy banks,
 “ And streamy Lara’s roar ! In angry strife
 “ *There*, noble Usnoth’s son, the hero fell.”

“ The hero in the rage of slaughter fell,” 385
 “ I with a bursting sigh exclaim’d.’ “ In war
 “ His hand was strong—death stalk’d behind his sword !”

“ To Lego’s mournful banks we came, and found
 “ His rising tomb ; and his colleagues in war—
 “ His bards of many songs were waiting there. 390
 “ Three days entire we o’er the hero mourn’d,
 “ And on the fourth I sounded Caithbat’s shield.
 “ Joyful around th’ assemblant heroes came,
 “ And shook their beamy spears.—Near with his host
 “ Cörlath, the friend of ear-borne Cairbar, stood. 395
 “ We, like a stream in strength, by night advane’d,
 “ And his brave heroes fell. When from their rest
 “ The people of the valley rose, their blood

- ‘ With morning’s light red-streaming they beheld.
- ‘ But unto Cormac’s echoing hall away, 400
- ‘ Like wreaths of mist, we roll’d. For, to defend
- ‘ The king, our swords with flaming brightness ’rose :—
- ‘ But empty were Temora’s silent halls !
- ‘ For, in his youth had noble Cormac fall’n !
- ‘ The royal chief of Erin was no more ! 405

- ‘ Despairing grief the sons of Ullin seiz’d,
- ‘ And gloomily and slowly they retir’d.
- ‘ So louring clouds, that long have threaten’d rain,
- ‘ With darkning shade retire behind the hills.
- ‘ On, in their grief, tow’rds Tura’s sounding bay, 410
- ‘ The sons of Usnoth mov’d. Fir’d with revenge
- ‘ By Selama’s tow’rs we pass’d.—Like Lano’s mist,
- ‘ When by the tempests of the desert driv’n,
- ‘ Cairbar away reluctantly retir’d.

- ‘ *“Twas then, O maid, I saw thee, like the light* 415
- ‘ *Of Etha’s sun !” “ Fair is that beam !”* ‘ I said,
- ‘ And in my bosom rose the crowded sigh.
- ‘ Fair as the morn, to Etha’s mournful chief
- ‘ Didst thou, Dar-thula, in thy beauty come.
- ‘ But on us have the winds deceptive blown, 420
- ‘ Daughter of Colla—and the foe is near.’

- ‘ Yes !’ then the rustling strength of Athos said,
- ‘ Near is the foe. Hoarse-clanging on the coast
- ‘ Their arms I heard, and saw the dusky wreaths
- ‘ Of Erin’s standard. Plain is Cairbar’s voice, 425
- ‘ And sounds in strength as Cromla’s falling stream.
- ‘ Before dusk night had shaded all the plain,
- ‘ He the dark ship had on the sea describ’d.
- ‘ On Lena’s plain with circumspective heed
- ‘ His people watch, and lift ten thousand swords— 430

‘—And let them lift,’ said Nathos with a smile,
 ‘ Ten thousand swords.—When o'er them danger hangs,
 ‘ Ne'er will the sons of car-borne Usnoth fear.
 ‘ Why dost thou large and rough with all thy foam,
 ‘ Thou rolling sea of mournful Ullin, rage ? 435
 ‘ Why do ye rustle on your nightly wings,
 ‘ Ye whistling, headstrong tempests of the sky ?
 ‘ Think ye, ye storms, that Nathos on the coast
 ‘ Ye do detain ? No :—children of the night,
 ‘ His *soul* detains him ! Bring my father's arms— 440
 ‘ Althos ! thou seest them beaming to the stars.
 ‘ Bring Semo's spear—it in the vessel stands !

The arms he brought. In all their shining steel
 Nathos his limbs enmail'd.—Then, lovely strides
 The chief, with joy terrific in his eyes. 445
 He tow'rds the coming of dark Cairbar looks,
 Whilst the false wind is rustling in his hair,
 And silent is Dar-thula at his side.
 Stedfast upon the chief her look she fix'd,
 Endeav'ring to repress the rising sigh, 450
 And two dark tears are swelling in her eyes.

‘ Althos !’ said Etha's chief, ‘ within that rock
 ‘ I see a cave. Conceal Dar-thula there :
 ‘ And let thy arm be strong.—We meet the foe,
 ‘ Ardan !—and gloomy Cairbar call to fight. 455
 ‘ O that, enrobed in his sounding steel,
 ‘ To meet the son of Usnoth now he came !
 ‘ If thou, Dar-thula, shalt perhaps escape :
 ‘ Away from falling Nathos turn thy eyes—
 ‘ And, Althos, lift tow'rds Etha's groves thy sails. 460

‘ Tell to the chief, that crowned with renown
 ‘ His son in battle fell ; and that my sword

‘ Did not the battle shun. Tell him I fell
 ‘ ‘Midst thousands ;—let his joy of grief be great.—
 ‘ Daughter of Colla ! When with dark’ning winds 465
 ‘ Bleak autumn blows to Etha’s echoing domes,
 ‘ The virgins call, and let their songs arise
 ‘ For Nathos. And his praise to sound in song,
 ‘ O that the voice of Cona might be heard !
 ‘ Then, in the mansion of my mountain-winds, 470
 ‘ With raptures would my spirit hear the sound !

—And thee, O Nathos, woody Etha’s chief,
 My voice shall praise ! O gen’rous Usnoth’s son,
 The voice of Ossian in thy praise *shall* rise !
 Why was I not on Lena, when aloud 475
 The battle rose ? For then would Ossian’s sword
 Thee have defended, or himself fall’n low.

We ’round the shell that night in Selma sat,
 And in the oaks abroad the wind was heard
 Mix’d with the shrieking of the mountain-ghost. 480
 The zeph’rous blast came rustling through the hall
 And gently touch’d my harp. But sad and low
 It sounded, like the music of the tomb.
 Fingál first heard it, and the crowded sighs
 Rose from his breast : ‘ Some of my chiefs in war 485
 ‘ Are low !’ the grey-hair’d king of Morven said.
 ‘ On my son’s harp the sound of death I hear !
 ‘ Now, Ossian, haste, and touch the sounding string
 ‘ And bid the sorrow rise, that their pale ghosts
 ‘ To Morven’s woody hills with joy may fly.’ 490
 The harp before the royal chief I touch’d,
 And low and mournful was the solemn sound.
 ‘ Bend forward from your clouds,’ I said, ‘ ye ghosts
 ‘ Of my forefathers ! bend—and of your course
 ‘ The terror red lay by.—The falling chief 495

' (Whether he from a distant land approach
 ' Or from the rolling sea arise) *receive*.
 ' Bring near his robe of mist, his airy spear
 ' Form'd of a cloud ; and, like the hero's sword
 ' Place by his side a meteor half-extinct. 500
 ' But, oh ! that bright his visage may appear,
 ' That in his presence his glad friends may joy.
 ' Bend forward from your alant clouds,' I said,
 ' Ye spirits of my pale forefathers ! *bend*.

In Selma to the lightly trembling lyre 505
 Such was my song. But Nathos pent in night
 On Ullin's shore remain'd. The noisy foe
 Amidst the roar of tumbling waves he heard.
 Silent he heard their voice, and on his spear
 Himself reclin'd. With all its circling beams
 The morning rose. The Erenites appear 510
 Like grisly rocks in vast expanse arrang'd
 With all their trees : along the coast they spread.
 Conspicuous, in the midst, dark Cairbar stood,
 And grimly smil'd, when he beheld the foe. 515

Then forward in his strength brave Nathos rush'd,
 Nor could the sad Dar-thula stay behind.
 Lifting with her white hands her shining spear
 She with the hero came.—And who are these
 In gleaming armour in the pride of youth ? 520
 Who---but the sons of Usnoth arm'd for fight
 Althos, and Ardan with the dark-brown hair.

' Come'—Nathos said, ' come ! high Temora's chief !
 ' And on the coast for the white-bosom'd maid
 ' Now let our battle be ! From Nathos far 525
 ' Abide his hosts—behind that rolling sea.
 ' Why then against the chief of Etha bring

‘ Thy thousands strong ?—In battle thou didst fly
 ‘ From him, when all his friends around him stood.’

To him in wrath Temora’s chief reply’d : 530
 ‘ Youth of the heart of pride, shall Erin’s king
 ‘ With thee contend ? Thy fathers, in the field,
 ‘ Were not renown’d, nor of the kings of men.
 ‘ Say—do the trophyed arms, the spoils of foes,
 ‘ Or shields of other times hang in their halls ? 535
 ‘ But, Cairbar in Temora is renown’d,
 ‘ Nor does he deign with little men to fight.’

From car-borne Nathos starts the gushing tear,
 And to his brothers, straight, his eyes he turn’d.
 At once, their spears flew deathful, and on earth 540
 Three heroes lay. Then, beaming tow’rds the skies
 The lightning of their gleamy sabres rose.
 As dusky clouds before a blast of wind
 Are ridge-wise driv’n, the ranks of Erin yield.
 Then, Cairbar to his people gave command ; 545
 And, at the word, a thousand bows they drew.
 A thousand arrows flew ; and (in the strife)
 The sons of Usnoth fell.—Like three young oaks,
 Which lonely on the hill once stood, they fell.
 The lovely trees the trav’ller lately saw, 550
 And greatly wonder’d at their lonely growth.
 The desert-blast came with its angry gusts
 And laid their heads of lively verdure low.
 Next day he pass’d them on his journey back,
 But they were wither’d, and the heath was bare. 555

In silent grief Dar-thula stood and saw
 Their sudden fall. No tear is in her eye,
 But wildly sad her countenance appears.
 Pale was her once-red cheek—an half form’d word

Her trembling lips broke short. And on th' wind 50
Dark flew her hair. But, gloomy Cairbar came.

‘ Where is thy lover now ?’ in scorn he said.
‘ Where is the car-borne chief of Etha gone ?
‘ Hast thou the stately halls of Usnoth seen ?
‘ Or, have thy eyes Fingál’s brown hills beheld ? 555
‘ Had not the winds, Dar-thula, thee detain’d ;
‘ On Morven loudly had my battle roar’d.
‘ Low wouldest Fingál himself in dust have liein,
‘ And sorrow now in mournful Selma dwelt.’

Down from Dar-thula’s arm then fell her shiel !, 570
And plain to view her breast of snow appear’d :—
Plain it appear’d—but it was stain’d with blood ;
For in her side an arrow fix’d abode,
On the fall’n Nathos, like a wreath of snow
She fell.—Her hair spreads darkly on his face, 575
And far and wide their blood is mixing ’round.

‘ Daughter of Colla here thou liest low !’
Said Cairbar’s hundred bards. ‘ Sad silence reigns
‘ At Selma’s azure streams : for now entire
‘ Fam’d Truthil’s race have fail’d.—When wilt thou rise 580
‘ In all thy beauty, first of Erin’s maids ?
‘ Long is thy sleep within the silent tomb,
‘ And far the distant morn. Unto thy bed
‘ The orient sun shall not approach and say :
‘ Awake, Dar-thula ! first of maids, awake ! 585
‘ Abroad the vernal gale its flight expands.
‘ Sweet on the hills their heads the flow’rets shake
‘ And the green woods their bursting foliage wave.’
‘ Retire, O sun :—the daughter of Colla sleeps.
‘ Forth in her beauty she no more will come— 590
‘ She in her steps of brightness will not move.’

Such was the dirgeful music of the bards
When they the tomb uprear'd. I o'er the grave
Sung, after ; when the king of Morven came—
When he to verdant Ullin's mountains came
In fight with car-borne Cairbar to contend.

END OF DAR-THULA.

Carric-thura :

A POEM.

ARGUMENT.

FINGAL, returning from an expedition which he had made into the Roman province, resolved to visit Cathulla, king of Inistore, and brother to Comala, whose story is related at large in the dramatic poem of that name. Upon his coming in sight of Carric-thura, the palace of Cathulla, he observed a flame on its top, which in those days was a signal of distress. The wind drove him into a bay at some distance from Carric-thura, and he was obliged to pass the night on the shore. Next day he attacked the army of Trothal, king of Sora, who had besieged Cathulla in his palace of Carric-thura, and took Trothal himself prisoner, after he had engaged him in a single combat. The deliverance of Carric-thura is the subject of the poem, but several other episodes are interwoven with it. It appears, from tradition, that this poem was addressed to a Culdee, or one of the first Christian missionaries, and that the story of the spirit of Loda, supposed to be the ancient Odin of Scandinavia, was introduced by Ossian in opposition to the Culdee's doctrine. Be this as it may, it lets us into Ossian's notion of a superior being; and shews that he was not addicted to the superstition, which prevailed all the world over, before the introduction of Christianity.

HAST thou left thy course on high,
Golden haired son of sky ?
Wide its gates the west has spread—
There thou restest on thy bed.
Thy bright beauty to behold,
Waves on waves in crowds are roll'd.
Restless, wheeling on their beds,
Up they lift their trembling heads.
From the surface of the deep
Bright they see thee in thy sleep :—
Yet from thy large-beaming hair
Still away they shrink with fear.—

5

10

Rest in thy shadowy cave, O sun, till morn,
And bright again with joyful light return.

But to the sound of Selma's lyres
Now raise a thousand flaming fires,
And let the beam illumine the domes;
The king of shells victorious comes.
The strife of Cona now is o'er,
As sounds decay'd, are heard no more.

15

In loudest strains, O bards, his praise proclaim;
For back the king is come with all his fame.

20

Such was the song of Ullin, when Fingál
Return'd from battle—when, in bloom of youth,
With all his locks fair-blushing he return'd.
Blue on the hero all his armour shone,
Like a gray cloud enveilant of the sun,
When in his robes of miss he dimly moves,
And shews but half his face.—The royal chief
His heroes follow: and of vast expanse
The feast of shells is seen. And brave Fingál
Turns to his bards, and bids the song to rise.

25

‘ Voices of echoing Cona's plains ! ’ he said,
‘ O bards of other times ! ye, on whose souls
The azure-hosts of our forefathers rise !
The warbling lyre strike in my sounding halls,
And let Fingál now hear the tuneful song.
Sweet is the joy of grief ! It pleasing comes
Like vernal show'rs, when with balsamic mist
The sapolin-branch they soften, and forthwith
The bursting leaf its verdant head protrudes.
Sing on, O bards---to-morrow we set sail.
Through the vast main, to Carric-thura's walls
Is my blue course. *There*, tow'ring, mossy rise

30

35

40

‘ The walls of Sarno, where Comála dwelt.
 ‘ *There*, like his noble sires, Cathnlla spreads
 ‘ The feast of shells. In his green groves immense
 ‘ In num’rous herds, the bristly boars are found ;
 ‘ And loud the echo of the chase shall rise.’

45

‘ Cronnan, thou son of song !’ then Ullin said,
 ‘ Minona, graceful at the trembling lyre !
 ‘ The mighty king of Morven’s ear to please,
 ‘ In plaintive strains the song of Shilric raise.
 ‘ And, like the show’ry bow, when on the lake
 ‘ It shews its lovely head, and in the west
 ‘ The evening-sun with circling brightness sets ;
 ‘ In all her beauty let Vinvélá come.
 ‘ And, O Fingál !—bright in her graceful mien
 ‘ She *comes* ! and soft her accent is, but *sad*.’

50

55

VINVELA.

My love is a son of the hill :—
 He chases the swift-footed deer.
 His grey dogs are panting around.
 His bow-string resounds in the air.—
 Dost thou rest by the fount of the rock,
 Or, by the loud mountainous rill ?
 The green rushes nod with the gale,
 And the mist flies apace o’er the hill.

60

65

My love unperceiv’d I’ll approach,
 Nor him will disturb or surprise :
 And, viewing him from that high rock,
 I’ll eagerly pleasure my eyes.
 For, lovely by Branno’s old oak
 Thou stately by me wast first seen.
 I saw thee return from the chase,
 The fairest of all thy brave train.

70

75

SHILRIC.

Hark! what is that voice which I hear?

A voice, like the summer's soft air!

'Tis not by the rushes I sit,

Nor the fount of the rock do I hear.

Afar—O Vinvéla, afar

80

I go to the wars of Fingál.

My dogs now attend me, no more,

In readiness waiting my call.

No longer I tread on the hill,

Nor yet am I seen on the shore.

85

From above, by the stream of the plain,

Fair-moving I see thee no more.

No more, in thy attitudes bright

As circles the bow of the sky,

Or, as shines on the waves of the west

90

The moon; shalt thou dazzle my eye.

VINVELA.

Then thou, my dear Shilric, art gone!

And I am alone on the hill!—

The deer are beheld on the brow—

Undaunted they graze at their will.

95

From danger suspected, no more

Are they now observed to flee.

No longer they start at the wind,

Nor at the loud-rustling tree.

Far hence the brave hunter is gone,

100

Nor longer appears on the plain:

But abides in the heat of the strife

Among the dark tombs of the slain.

Ye strangers from far distant lands!

Ye sons of the sky-colour'd main!

105

My Shilric beloved O spare !
Your sabres, in pity, restrain !

SHILRIC.

If fall I must then in the field,
Courageously fighting the foe :
High raise, O Vinvéla, my grave,
To point out where Shilric lies low !
Grey stones with much heaped-up earth,
A long time amass'd to remain,
Shall long to futurity speak—
And picture my memory plain. 115

When the hunter shall sit by the mound,
And dine amidst noon's scorching rays ;
" Some warrior rests here," he will say,
And my fame shall still live in his praise.
When low in the earth I am laid
Beneath the fast-mouldering hill ;
With wonted affection and love,
Vinvéla remember me still !

VINVELA.

Thee, surely remember I will !
Thy mem'ry shall yield me content. 125
My Shilric will certainly fall,
And leave me alone to lament !
And what, O my love, shall I do,
When away thou for ever art gone ?
In silence I'll wander the heath,
And traverse these mountains at noon.

In grief I will wander abroad,
And frequently visit the place
Where sweetly thou tookest thy rest,

When return'd from the toil of the chase.
 “ My Shilric will certainly fall,
 “ And leave me alone to lament !
 “ But him still remember I will—
 “ His mem’ry shall give me content.”

135

“ And I,’ the king of woody Morven said,
 ‘ The chief remember. In his growing rage
 ‘ The battle he consum’d. But now my eyes
 ‘ Behold him not.—One day upon the hill
 ‘ I met him, and observ’d a pallid cast
 ‘ His cheek o’erspread, and dark his brow appear’d.
 ‘ The sigh was frequent in his heaving breast,
 ‘ And his slow steps were tow’rds the desert turn’d.
 ‘ But now, when loud my sounding shields arise,
 ‘ Amongst my crowded chiefs he is not seen.
 ‘ Dwells now the warrior in the narrow house,
 ‘ O tuneful chief of high Carmora say ?’

140

145

150

‘ Cronnan !’ said Ullin (bard of other times)
 ‘ The song of Shilric raise when to his hills
 ‘ He came—and fair Vinvéla was no more.
 ‘ Though on her grizly, moss-grown stone he lean’d,
 ‘ He thought Vinvéla liv’d.—Her on the plain
 ‘ Fair-moving he beheld : but the bright form
 ‘ Did not remain. The sunbeam, scarcely view’d,
 ‘ Fled from the field, and she was seen no more.—
 ‘ The song of Shilric hear. ‘Tis soft but sad.’

155

160

I by the mossy fountain sit,
 High in the wind and rain.
 Above me is one rustling tree—
 Dark waves roll o’er the plain.
 From off the hill the deer descend.
 Below, the lake rolls high.

165

No hunter's at a distance seen—
 No whistling cow-herd nigh.
 One voiceless silence reigns, and it is noon :
 And sad and pensive here I sit alone !

170

Didst thou, a wand'rer on the heath,
 My darling, but appear.
 With floating hair upon the wind,
 With heaving bosom bare :—
 With tears full-starting from thy eyes, 175
 (Still for thy friends in quest,
 Beyond the mountain-mist conceal'd)
 Soon should'st thou meet with rest.
 Thee would I comfort and with thee would roan ;
 And safely bring thee to thy father's home.

180

But is it she, that there appears
 Light-beaming on the plain ?
 Bright as the moon in autumn shines,
 Or, as in summer-rain
 Mild gleams the sun ; O lovely maid, 185
 Through rocks and mountain-breaks,
 In anxious search for thy lov'd friends,
 Say—comest thou ?—she speaks !
 And ah ! her voice ! how weak it is, and low,
 As through the marshy reeds the breezes blow !

190

VINVELA's GHOST.

Com'st thou again unhurt from war ?
 Are not thy friends return'd ?
 I of thy death heard on the hill,
 And thee, O Shilric mourn'd !—

SHILRIC's REPLY.

Yes, O my fair one, I return 195
 Alone of all my race.
 Them thou shalt see no more!—their tombs
 I raised in their place.
 But why alone, upon the desert-hill,
 In noon-day heat; when all around is still? 200

VINVELA's GHOST.

Within the winter-house alone,
 O Shilric, I abide.
 I'm pale, O Shilric, in the tomb
 With grief for thee I dy'd!—

SHILRIC.

Grey, like the mist before the gale, 205
 She fleets—she sails away!
 Wilt thou not stay, and see my tears?
 Stay, lov'd Vinvela, stay!
 Fair, O Vinvela, is thy present mien!
 And, when alive, fair was thy visage seen! 210

I'll by the mossy fountain sit
 Amidst the winds above.—
 When noon is silent all around,
 Converse with me, my love!
 Borne on the pinions of the gale 215
 O hither come, I pray!
 Upon the mountain's wint'ry blast
 O come, and with me stay!
 Amidst thy way, converse upon the hill
 With feeble voice, when noon around is still.

Such was the song of Cronnan, on the night
 Of Selma's joy. But morning in the east

Arose, and blue in light the waters roll'd,
His sails Fingál commanded high to rise,
And rustling from their hills the breezes came. 225
To sight arose the land of Inistore
And Carric-thura's cloud-capt, mossy tow'rs.
But on their top, the signal of distress,
The *virent flame* with bord'ring smoke arose.
His breast the royal chief of Morven struck, 230
And, straight, his spear assum'd. He to the coast
His darkn'd brow bends forward, and anon
Looks to the liggiung winds; whilst down his back
In wild disorder hangs his spreading hair;
And awful is the silence of the king! 235

Down on the sea dusk came the gloom of night,
And Rotha's winding bay receiv'd the ship.
Along the coast with all its echoing wood
A rock extending bends.—Upon the top
Stands Loda's circle and the *stone of pow'r* 240
With aged moss earob'd. A narrow plain
With grass and aged trees bespread entire,
Which from the shaggy rock the midnight-winds
Had in their wrath uprooted; spreads beneath.
There, rolls the azure-current of a stream, 245
And ocean's lonely blast the thistle's beard
Alone pursues.—Flames from three oaks arose.
Wide spreads the feast, but still the royal soul
For Carrie-thura's battling chief is sad.

The wan, cold moon rose in the bright'ning east 250
And on the youths the shades of slumber fell.
Their helms cerulean glitter to the beam,
And by degrees the fading fire decays:—
But on the royal chief sleep did not rest.
Slow in his arms he rose, and up the hill, 255
To view the flame of Sarno's tow'r, he went.

Far off and dim appear'd the rising flame,
 And her red face the moon hid in the east.
 Loud-rustling from the mountain came a blast,
 And on its wings the ghost of Loda bore. 260
 He, to his place, in all his terrors came,
 And shook his dusky spear. In his dark face
 Like flames his eyes appear.—His hollow voice,
 Like distant thunder, roars ; and at the sound,
 Arm'd with the glitt'ring javlin of his strength, 265
 Fingál advanc'd, and rais'd his voice on high.

‘ Son of the night, retire ;’ aloud he cry'd.
 ‘ Now call thy winds and fly. To me enmail'd,
 ‘ Why with thy arms of shadow dost thou come ?
 ‘ Do I, thou dismal spirit of Loda, fear 270
 ‘ Thy gloomy form ? Weak is thy shield of clouds,
 ‘ And feeble is that meteor, thy faint sword.
 ‘ The blast them rolls together, and thyself
 ‘ Dost quickly vanish. From my presence haste,
 ‘ Dark son of night ! Now call thy winds, and fly.’ 275

‘ Dost thou me force,’ the hollow voice reply'd,
 ‘ From my own rightful place ? Before my pow'r
 ‘ The people bend.—The battle in the field
 ‘ Of heroes I, at my mere option, turn.
 ‘ I look upon the nations, and away 280
 ‘ They vanish ; and the baneful blast of death
 ‘ My nostrils pour. Abroad upon the winds
 ‘ I come with tempests dire before my face.—
 ‘ But calm, above the clouds, is my abode ;
 ‘ And pleasant are the fields of my repose.’ 285

‘ In thy calm field abide then,’ said Fingál,
 ‘ And let the son of Comhal be forgot.
 ‘ Up from my hills into thy peaceful plains

‘ Do I presumptive come?—Borne on thy cloud
 ‘ Thee, spirit of dismal Loda, with a spear 290
 ‘ Do I presume to meet?—Why on Fingál
 ‘ Dost thou then frown? Why shake thy airy spear?
 ‘ But know; that all thy threatenings are in vain,
 ‘ For I from men of valour never fled.
 ‘ And shall the thin and shady sons of wind 295
 ‘ With dread the king of woody Morven strike?
 ‘ No: he well-knows the weakness of their arms.’

‘ Fly to thy land,’ to him reply’d the form:—
 ‘ Receive the wind (to thee I grant) and fly.
 ‘ The blasts are in the hollow of my hand, 300
 ‘ And mine, too, is the journey of the storm.
 ‘ The royal chief of Sora is my son.
 For at the stonc of my great pow’r he bends.
 ‘ ’Round Carric-thura hot his battle grows,
 ‘ And he, O son of Comhal, will prevail.— 305
 ‘ Fly to thy land—or, feel my flaming wrath.’

His spear, of shade enforg’d, he lifted high,
 And forward bent, at once, his awful height:
 But his dread sword the king advancing drew—
 The blade of dark-brown Luno.—Its bright steel 310
 Through the dark spirit winds its gleaming path!
 Then, like a yielding beam of fading smoke
 [When rising from the furnace half-extinct,
 A boy disturbs it with the waving staff],
 The shady form fell shapeless into air. 315

The spirit of Loda shriek’d, as on the wind
 Enroll’d into himself he upwards rose.
 An earthquake vast, created by the sound,
 Through all the land of Inistore was felt.
 The billows heard it on the briny deep, 320

And, panic-struck, they in their journey stop'd.
 At once, Fingál's associates starting took
 Their pond'rous spears. They could not see the king!
 They rose with rage, and all their arms resound.

Forth in the east the moon burst, and the king
 Amidst the splendor of his arms return'd.

325

Great was the joy of all his bright'ning youths!

For, like a sea when back the storm is gone,
 Subsided were their souls. The song of joy
 Ag'd Ullin rais'd: and in the sound partook
 The hills of Inistore with echoes loud.

330

The soaring flame rose from the groaning oak,
 And through their crowds the tales of heroes go.

But in dark sadness underneath a tree
 Sits gloomy Frothal, Sora's battling king.

335

'Round Carric-thura spreads the teeming host,
 And tow'rds the walls with flaming eyes he looks.—

For young Cathulla's blood, who once in war
 O'ercame the king, with strong desire he longs.—

When Annir, car-borne Frothal's noble sire,
 In Sora reign'd, a blast rose on the sea,

340

And Frothal into Inistore convey'd.—
 Three festive days in Sarno's halls he spent,

And saw Comála of slow-rolling eyes.
 Her, in the passion of his youth, he lov'd,

345

And rush'd, the virgin of white arms to seize.
 Cathulla met the chief, and soon the strife

Of gloomy battle rose.—Within the hall
 Frothal is bound—three days he pin'd alone.

Him, on the fourth, brave Sarno to his ship
 Releas'd; and to his land again he came.—

350

Yet still against Cathulla (noble youth!)
 The rage of wrath his dark'ning soul o'erspread.—

When high the stone of Annir's fame arose,
Surrounded with his thousands Frothal came. 355
'Round Carric-thura's massy, airy tow'r's
And Sarno's mossy walls the battle burn'd.

Morn 'rose on Inistore, and Frothal struck
His dark-brown shield. Obedient to the sound
His starting chiefs arose. They silent stood— 360
For, tow'rds the sea their wond'ring eyes were turn'd.
They saw Fingál advancing in his strength,
And first the noble Thubar silence broke:

‘ Who comes,’ he said, ‘ tall as the mountain-stag,
‘ With all his herd in train?—It is a foe— 365
‘ His forward spear, O Frothal, I perceive.
‘ Perhaps it is Fingál, the first of men,
‘ The king of Morven. On green Gormal's plains
‘ Well are his actions known. In Sarno's halls
‘ The crimson of his foes is deathful left. 370
‘ Shall I of him entreat the peace of kings?
‘ For, like heav'n's thunder roars he in the field !’

Frothal reply'd: ‘ Son of the feeble hand,
‘ In darkness wading shall my days begin?
‘ Shall I, O chief of streamy Tora, yield 375
‘ Before my conq'ring arm in battle shine?
‘ 'Mongst Sora's people would the story go:
‘ Frothal in youth forth, like a meteor, flew—
‘ But darkly set in clouds; and is no more.’
‘ No: never, Thubar, will I yield the day. 380
‘ 'Round me, like light, my bright'ning fame shall rise—
‘ No: king of Tora, never will I yield.’

Forth with the stream of all his host he went:
But, of a rock th' unyielding strength they met.

Fingál unmov'd, enmail'd for battle stood ;
 And from his side they broken, backward roll'd.
 Nor did they roll in safety : for, the spear,
 The royal spear their speedy flight pursu'd.
 The strated field with bleeding heroes teems,
 And the fled host a rising hill preserv'd.

385

Frothal beheld their flight, and in his breast
 Dark rage arose, and downward to the ground
 His eyes he bent ; and noble Thubar call'd.

‘ Thubar !’ he said, ‘ my timid host have fled,
 ‘ And my renown has ceased to arise.—
 ‘ *I'll* fight the king—I feel my burning soul.
 ‘ The combat to demand, now send a bard.
 ‘ Nor speak dissuasive of firm Frothal's words
 ‘ —But, Thubar ! know—a virgin I adore,
 ‘ And by green Tbano's winding stream she dwells.
 ‘ ’Tis Herman's virgin, the white-bosom'd maid.
 ‘ ’Tis Utha with the softly rolling eyes.
 ‘ She fear'd the daughter of green Inistore,
 ‘ And soft, at my departure, rose her sighs.
 ‘ Tell Utha that in earth I low am laid,
 ‘ But that my soul was with her charms absorb'd.’

395

400

405

Such were his words, resolved on the fight ;
 But softly rose the sigh of Utha near.
 She o'er the sea, in armour like a man,
 Her hero had pursu'd.—She on the youth
 In secret, from beneath a helmet bright,
 Her eye had roll'd. But now the bard she saw
 Depart, and from her hand thrice fell the spear.
 Loose flew her hair upon the rustling breeze,
 And white her breast with heaving sighs arose.
 Up to the king her eyes she lifted sad ;—
 She thrice assay'd to speak, but thrice she fail'd.

410

415

Fingál the challenge by the bard receiv'd,
And in the strength of steel enmail'd he came.
Their deathful spears they mix'd, and raised high 420
The glimm'ring of their swords. But with dread fall
Fingál's broad steel cut Frothal's shield in twain.
His fair side bare—half-bent, his death he sees.

On Utha's soul, dark-gath'ring gloom advanc'd,
And down her cheek big roll'd the pearly tear. 425
With her bright shield to shide the chief she rush'd,
But of her steps obstructive lay an oak.
Upon her arm of snow on earth she fell,
And *here and there*, her *shield*, her *helmet* lay.
White to the sight her heaving bosom rose, 430
And wild on earth her dark-brown hair is spread.

Fingál with pity for the white-arm'd maid
Was mov'd: and, straight—th' uplifted sword he stay'd.
The bursting tear stood in the royal eye,
As, bending forward, he to Frothal spoke. 435
‘ Fear not, O streamy Sora's king,’ he said,
‘ The sabre of Fingál. ’Twas never stain'd
‘ With the chill blood, that in the vanquish'd flows ;
‘ Nor pierc'd a yielding foe.—Now let thy hosts
‘ Beside blue Tora's streams embosom joy ; 440
‘ And let the virgins of thy love be glad.
‘ Why, king of Sora, should'st thou fall in youth ?’

The bright'ning Frothal heard Fingál's kind words,
And saw the rising maid.—Like two young trees
Green-spreading on the plain, when on their leaves 445
The show'r of spring 'midst genial gales descends,
And the chill blasts of wint'ry roar are laid ;
In silence they, with growing beauty, stood.

‘ Didst thou,’ said Frothal, ‘ come from Tora’s streams—
 ‘ Didst thou, to see the youthful warrior low, 450
 ‘ Daughter of Herman, in thy beauty come ?
 ‘ But—virgin of the slowly-rolling eye,
 ‘ He was indeed before the mighty *low* !
 ‘ Nor did the feeble conquer Annir’s son.—
 ‘ —O royal chief of woody Morven’s hills ! 455
 ‘ Dreadful art thou in battles of the spear,—
 ‘ —But—like the sun, when through a silent show’r,
 ‘ With smiles he looks ; appears in peace thy mien.
 ‘ The flow’rs before him lift their tinted heads
 ‘ And the soft gale expand their rustling wings. 460
 ‘ O that thou wert in Sora!—that my feast
 ‘ Were widely spread ! Thy armour with delight
 ‘ The future kings of Sora would behold.
 ‘ They would rejoice at their forefathers’ fame,
 ‘ Whose chance it was renown’d Fingál to see.’ 465

‘ O Annir’s son,’ the royal chief reply’d,
 ‘ The fame of Sora’s race afar shall sound.
 ‘ When chiefs are strong in battle—then, the song
 ‘ Loud does arise !—But, if their haughty swords
 ‘ Be o’er the feeble stretch’d ; or, if their arms 470
 ‘ Be stain’d with blood, when weakness lowly bends :
 ‘ Them shall the bard in tuneful song forget,
 ‘ And in oblivion lost their tombs shall lie.
 ‘ *There* shall the stranger come (to build dispos’d)
 ‘ And move away the nearly vanish’d mound. 475
 ‘ Before his face a half-worn sword shall rise,
 ‘ And, o’er it bending thoughtful, he will say :
 ‘ These are the arms of warlike chiefs of old,
 ‘ But their renown and names are not in song.”—
 ‘ Now to the spreading feast of Inistore 480
 ‘ Come thou, O Frothal, Sora’s mighty chief.
 ‘ Let thy lov’d virgin also join the throng,
 ‘ And let our faces brighten with delight.’

Then onward moving in his steps of might,
Fingál assum'd his spear.—And, at his word, 485
The gates of Carric-thura wide are thrown ;
And large the feast of sounding shells extends.
The dulcet voice of trembling music 'rose,
And in the hall the light of gladness spread.
Loud was the tuneful voice of Ullin heard, 490
And sweetly was the lyre of Selma strung.
Joy, in his presence, rose in Utha's soul,
And she the pleasing song of grief requir'd.
Big hung the tear in her pathetic eye,
When she the song of soft Crimora heard— 495
Crimora (aged Rinval's daughter fair !)
Who at the mighty stream of Lotha dwelt.
Long was the tale, but lovely was the sound,
And gave to Tora's blushing virgin joy.

CRIMORA.

Who, like a cloud ting'd with the western ray, 500
Down from the hill now comes along this way ?
Whose voice is that, loud as the breezy gale ;
Yet sweet as Carril's lyre, along the vale ?
It is my love, array'd in armour bright,
But sad his darken'd brow is to the sight ! 505
Say—live the brave Fingal's renowned race ?
Or, what disturbs my lovely Connal's peace ?

CONNAL.

They live. I saw them, like a stream of light,
Come from the chase, fair-beaming to the sight !
The sun was on their shields, and from the plain 510
A ridge of fire appear'd the mighty train,

Accoutred thus, they marched from the hill.
Loud are the voices of the youth, and shrill.

Their mien is manly and devoid of fear.
The war, my love!—the rage of war is near.

515

Fingál's brave race presuming to defy—
Of our fam'd race resolv'd the force to try—
(The race of wounds and battles of renown !)
Dread Dargo hastens with the morning dawn.

CRIMORA.

His spreading sails to me appeared plain,
Grey like the mist upon the sable main.
Connal ! I saw them slowly come to land,
And in large numbers Dargo's warriors stand.

520

CONNAL.

Bring me thy mighty father's sounding shield—
The bossy ir'n, that Rinval us'd to wield :
That shield, that shone to foes before it driv'n,
Like the full moon, when dusk it moves through heav'n !

525

CRIMORA.

Connal ! my aid, to bring that shield, I lend—
But it my father's arm did not defend.
By Gormar's spear my mighty father bled ;
And low perhaps may Connal too be laid !

530

CONNAL.

'Tis possible that I may also die—
Yet raise my monument, Crimora, high.
Grey stones and earth high-rais'd above the ground
Shall to my mem'ry form a lasting mound.

535

Above my tomb bend down thy grief-red eye,
And beat thy troubled bosom heaving high.
To ease thy mind, in lonely discontent,
In mournful gestures give thy grief full vent.

Though fair thou art (my charmer!) as the light, 540
 Sweet as the gale upon the airy height:
 Yet with thee now no longer will I stay.
 Crimora! raise my monument, I pray!

CRIMORA.

Then give to me those beaming arms of light,
 That spear of steel, that sword of polish bright. 545
 With thee I'll meet fierce Dargo of the car,
 And aid my lovely Connal in the war.
 Farewell, ye rocks of woody Ardven chill,
 Ye deer, and all ye streamlets of the hill!
 Never hereafter shall we more return! 550
 Our silent tombs are on the distant bourn.

‘ And did they not,’ said Utha’s bursting sigh,
 ‘ Again return? say—did the mighty fall
 ‘ In angry strife, and did Crimora live?
 ‘ For Connal, who her ardent love engag’d, 555
 ‘ Her steps were lonely, and her soul was sad.
 ‘ Was he not young, and lovely to behold;
 ‘ In beauty beaming like the setting sun?’

The virgin’s tear fair-starting, Ullin saw;
 And straightway took the softly trembling lyre. 560
 Lovely, but sad, then rose the tuneful song,
 And silence strict in Carrie-thura reign’d.

Dark on the mountains autumn lours—

Grey mist hangs on the hills.

The whirlwind on the heath is heard, 565

And with its num’rous rills

Dark rolls the river round the plain

And near the rising mound

One lonely tree points out the place

Of Connal’s sleep profound,

570

In tempests loud its aged boughs
 With groaning motions wave.
 'Round with the wind its leaves are whirl'd
 And strew the silent grave.
 The shady spirits of the dead
 At times are here beheld,
 When slow the pensive hunter stalks
 'Lone on the heathy field.

575

Who, Connal, can by counting reach
 The founder of thy race ?
 Or, who by telling name by name,
 Can thy forefathers trace ?
 Thy house was like the mountain-oak,
 That spreads its branches wide,
 And with its green and lofty head
 Defies the airy tide.

580

But now, with all its sturdy strength,
 It from the earth is torn !—
 The chief, that Connal's place shall fill—
 Say, where shall he be born ?
 The dauntless chiefs went out to war—
 Their mournful spouses moan'd,
 Here was the angry din of arms,
 And here the dying groan'd.

590

With streams of reeking blood were mark'd
 The wars of great Fingál !
 And here, amidst thy youthful strength,
 O Connal, thou didst fall.
 Thy sword appear'd a beam of heav'n ;
 A tempest was thy arm :
 Thy height, a rock upon the plain :
 Thy eyes, a furnace warm.

595

600

Thy voice in battles of thy steel

Was louder than a storm.

And matchless also were thy deeds,

605

Which there thou didst perform.

As falls the thistle by the staff,

When by a boy 'tis driv'n :

So warriors fell beneath thy sword,

As by the blast of heav'n.

610

On, like a cloud of thunder black,

The mighty Dargo came :

And, like the forked lightning's blaze,

His armour was a flame.

Contracted were his brows, and dark :

615

Like sister-caves his eyes :

Bright rose their swords on either side.—

From steel dire echoes rise.

Near stood Crimora, Rinval's fair,

In manly armour bright.

620

Loose flew her yellow hair behind—

Then, in her fingers white

The bow she took, and to the war

Her fav'rite youth pursu'd—

Her much beloved youth, nor shunn'd

625

The rage of strife and blood.

On Dargo then, with all her might,

The sounding string she drew ;

But singing, to her Connal's heart

The wand'ring arrow flew.—

630

Down like an oak upon the plain

He falls, to rise no more.

So from the shaggy hill descends

A rock, with murm'ring roar.

What shall she do, unhappy maid !

635

He bleeds ! Her Connal dies !

She all the night incessant mourns,

And all the day she cries :

‘ My love ! O Connal ! O my friend !

‘ Ease I must never know !—

640

At length the hapless mourner dies,

The prey to grief and woe.

The loveliest pair upon the hill

These earthen mounds enclose,

And from the seamlets of the stones

645

The grass green waving grows.

Oft' in the mournful shade I sit

Amidst the breezeful wind :

And, by its sighs, their mem'ry torn

Comes rushing on my mind.

650

No longer hapless Connal bleeds,

Nor does Crimora weep.

Here, undisturbed in the ground

You now together sleep.

Beneath the mountain's airy gale

655

Within the lonely tomb,

Free from the rage of wars and strife,

Here you repose alone.

‘ And soft,’ said Utha, ‘ be your lonely rest,

‘ O streamy Lotha's children, in the tomb !

660

‘ With tears, you in my mem'ry will I keep ;

‘ And, when the winds in Tora's groves arise

‘ And neighb'ring roars the wild and streamy flood :

‘ Then, mournful shall my secret song be heard.—

‘ *Then*, thinly bright, with all your lovely grief,

665

‘ Shall ye upon my musing soul be pour'd.’

Three days the royal chieftains held the feast ;
And white, upon the fourth, their sails arose.
The northern winds to Morven's woody land
The bounding vessel of Fingál convey. 670
—But in his cloud, behind young Frotha's ships,
The ghost of Loda sat.—With all his blasts
He forward hung, and spread the albid sails :—
But kept in mind the wounds of his thin form,
Still apprehensive of the royal hand. 675

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END OF VOL. I.



